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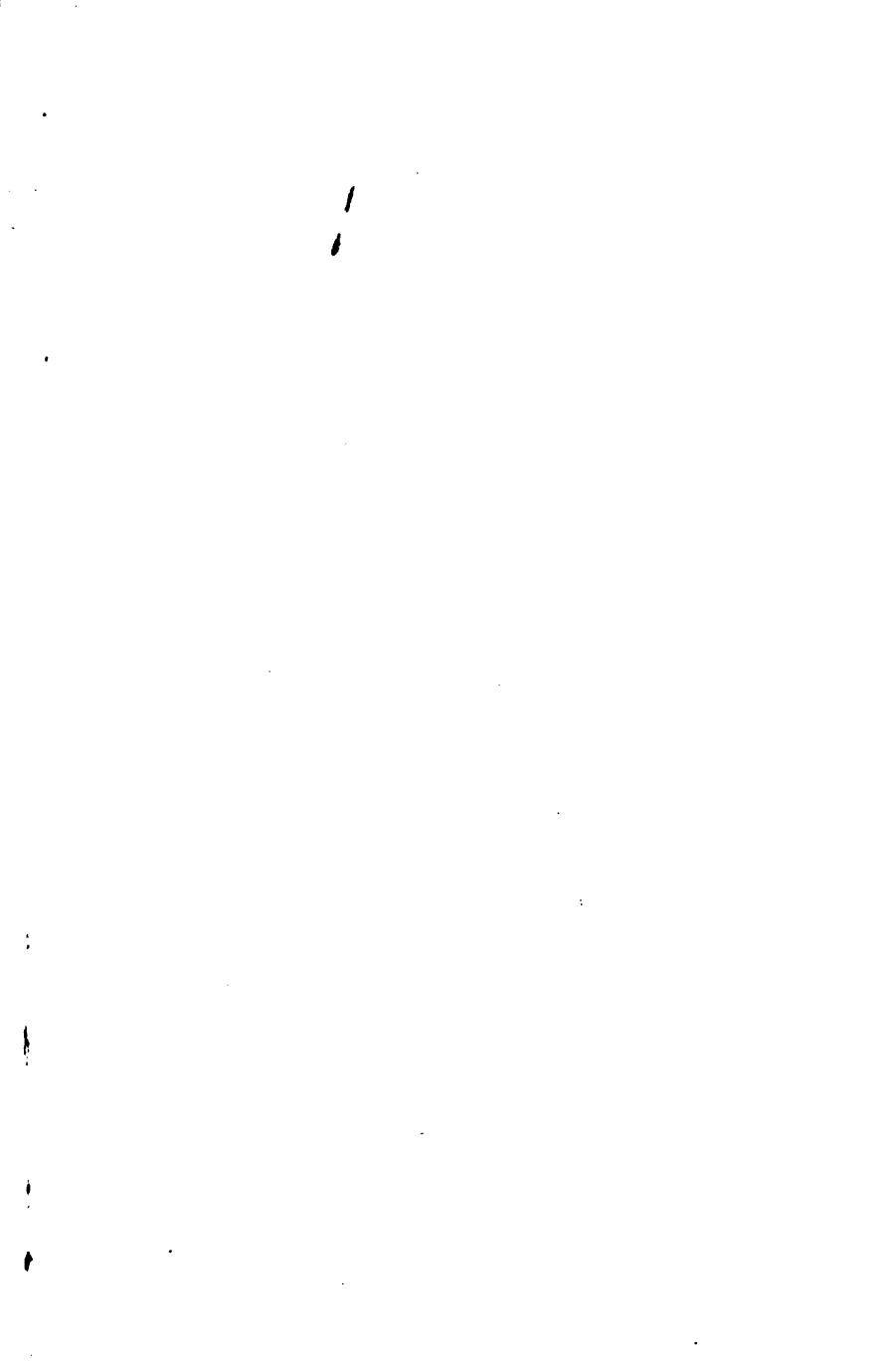
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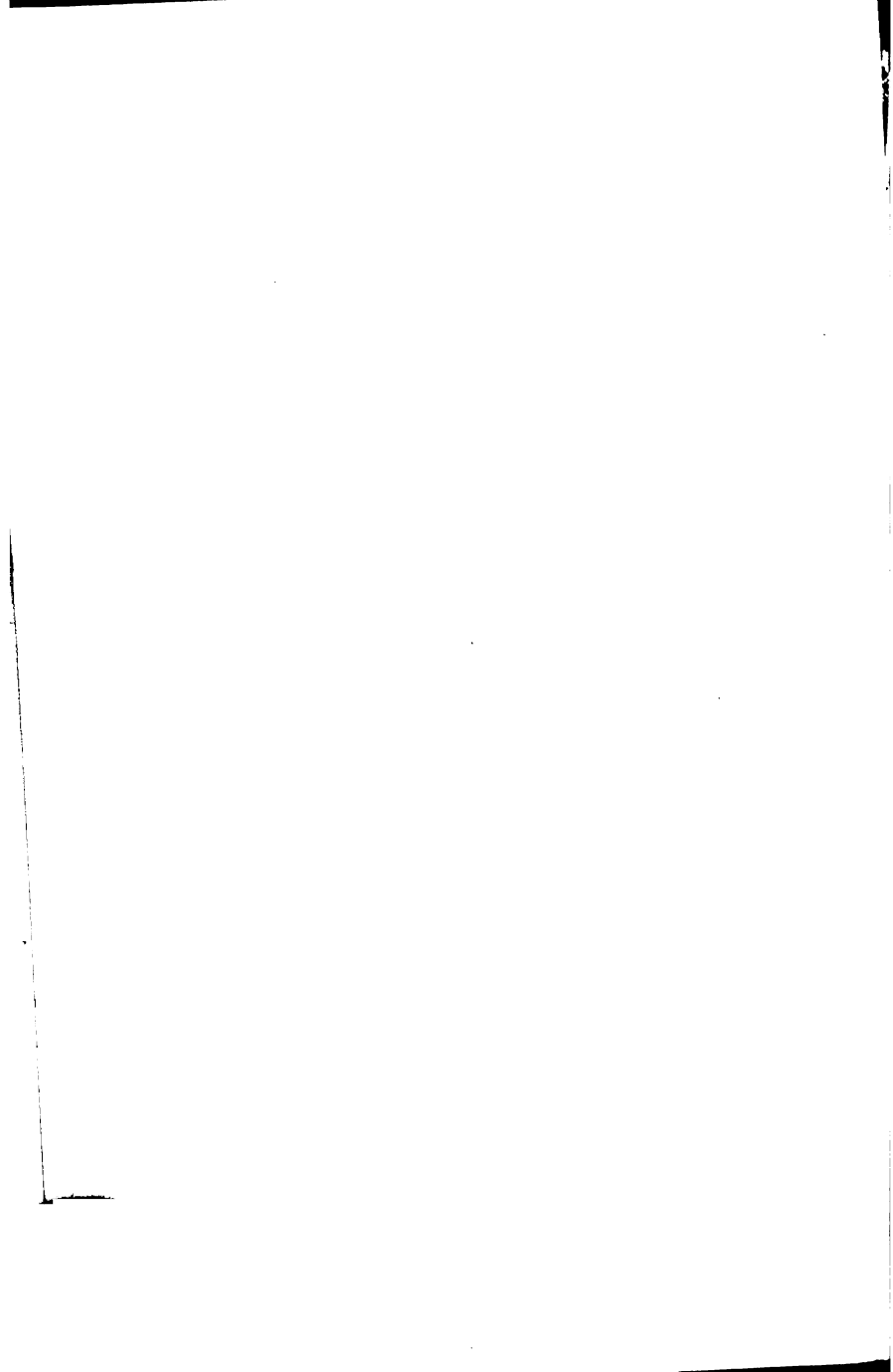
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RETAIL SELLING

S. ROLAND HALL







SHORT TALKS ON RETAIL SELLING

BY

S. ROLAND HALL

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ALBION, ILL.

TO
RETAIL SALESMEN AND SALESWOMEN

THAT GREAT ARMY OF WORKERS, THROUGH WHOM
MOST OF THE MATERIAL WANTS OF MANKIND MUST
BE SUPPLIED, WHOSE DAILY CONTACT WITH THE
WORLD AFFORDS A RICH AND VARIED STUDY OF
HUMAN NATURE, WHO HAVE IT IN THEIR POWER TO
CONTRIBUTE SO MUCH OF JOY AND COMFORT TO
OTHER MEN AND WOMEN—

THIS BOOK IS APPRECIATIVELY DEDICATED.

S. R. H.

FOREWORD

SOME years ago, while engaged in vocational educational work, I became much interested in the sales-schools that various enterprising merchants were conducting to improve the service of their stores. I procured and examined the "store papers" that still more merchants were publishing for the purpose of developing ambition and energy, of cultivating a cheerful, loyal, courteous working-spirit, and of imparting definite instruction in the fine art of retail selling.

Some ideas on this big subject began to clamor, as it were, for expression, and so I began the publication of a little pocket-sized periodical, which I called **SELLING SENSE**, and which I offered in quantities to merchants, the idea being that the employer would put a copy in the hands of each of his salespeople.

The plan was well received. Soon a

good-sized list of stores from the Atlantic to the Pacific were using **SELLING SENSE** as part of their educational plan. I never enjoyed writing anything more than I did this **SELLING SENSE** matter, and only the pressure of other work caused me to turn the publication over to others.

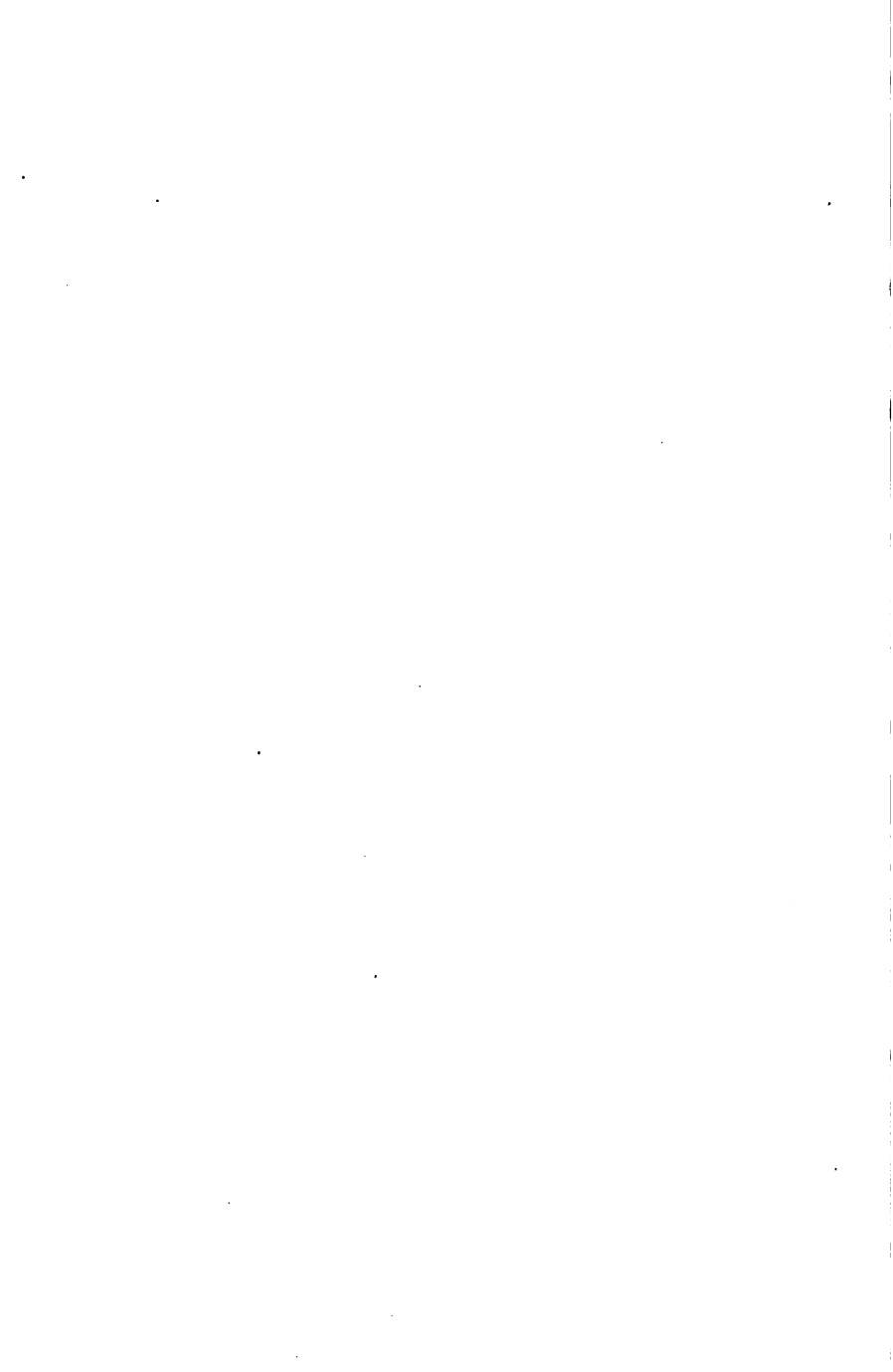
The popularity of these retail selling talks led me to believe that the best of the material written for **SELLING SENSE** would be well received if published in book form. Hence this volume, which also contains some new articles.

Most people learn what they know of salesmanship by actual experience. By the experience plan, we do not study things in an orderly fashion, but learn a little here and a little there. This book is laid out on the "experience plan," so to speak. No attempt is made to treat the subject of retail salesmanship in a progressive manner. A text-book on salesmanship written in such a way is more than likely to be pedantic, theoretical, and uninteresting. I have the notion that most peo-

ple enjoy a book on selling methods more because of its being made up of short articles that can be read easily at odd moments; and it is believed that the points of good salesmanship discust in this free and easy manner will not prove to be less helpful because of their manner of presentation.

S. ROLAND HALL.

College Hill, Easton, Pa.



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"A CRACKERJACK SALESMAN"



CAN it be said of you? You couldn't win a better compliment.

For selling is the big job nowadays. The great manufacturers admit that it is more important to know how to sell goods than to know how to make them.

Selling isn't mere "separating people from their money." It is studying merchandise and studying people, and helping people to appreciate the merits of the merchandise.

Selling is a fine art if you make the most of it. It sharpens the wits—makes bigger men and women.

Out of every ten people trying to sell goods, one is a real salesman. The others are just "order-takers."

The opportunities for the real salesman are practically unlimited. He need never want. The latch-string hangs out everywhere for him; and HIM here means HER as well.

Be the ONE in ten!

THE GREAT BUSINESS OF RETAIL SELLING

ONE does not have to be a prophet to see that in the years ahead of us retail merchandising will receive more close attention and study than it has received in the past. Retailing has been a great business almost since the world began. As Mr. George H. Perry, formerly of the Wanamaker and the Gimbel stores, has said, if age entitles a profession or a business to honor, surely the retail merchant's calling should be an honored one, for it is as old as law and order and older than medicine.

Retailing, in the generations past, was largely a haggling business—a battle of wits between merchant and customer. If either could get the better of the other, he felt that it was proper to do so. Little thought was given to the science and the art of selling.

But merchandising, like other great forms of human effort, has been evolving

and improving. To-day, the higher forms of selling are regarded generally as forms of service. The salesman, first of all, is the manufacturer's most valuable ally; without him, factories close and freight-trains are side-tracked. Then, there is the customer's side of the matter: he who enables men and women to purchase, with their earnings, the goods that make life most pleasurable and comfortable, who makes the exchange of money for commodities the most pleasant of business transactions, is a great salesman, a real merchant—one who is sure to win material and other rewards.

No longer can merchandising be properly regarded as mere "separating people from their money" or a battle of wits. In most lines of business, the merchant or salesman has done a poor day's work for the store when a customer has been served so poorly that he or she goes away resolved never to purchase at that place again.

It is the business of the true merchant and his representatives, the salespeople, to

study goods and to study people, their needs, wants, and tastes; to buy goods judiciously and to sell them skilfully, so that those who use the merchandise may get its best service.

The retail store occupies a great place. Daily it is concerned with the most intimate phases of our lives—our food, our clothing, our homes, our work. Many of our great men have devoted their lives and their best thought to the retail business; but merchandising as a life work has not received from young men and young women generally the serious thought that it is entitled to. The usual conception seems to be that, because the public has certain well-defined wants, anybody can stand behind the counter or on the sales-floor and meet those wants. The store has been looked upon as a place for employment only in case something better could not be had. The truth is that there are comparatively few good salesmen and saleswomen, and that in no business is there more pressing need for capable and

conscientious workers. It is certainly true that even a poor salesman can sell some goods. Some goods almost sell themselves. But to sell the most goods to the most people, and to sell them in such a way as to give the buyers the most pleasure and the most satisfaction, as well as to create the most good-will for the store, is a task requiring as much thought and painstaking effort as is required in any calling.

Some are born with considerable aptitude for selling, just as others are born with considerable aptitude for mechanics. Most people in the business of selling have only ordinary aptitude. To climb to the top means that the business of selling must be studied earnestly and continually. No matter how much you know, there is always something more to learn about goods, about people, and about ways and means of appealing to their wants.

If you are in the retail business, or are planning to enter it, you should not be satisfied with being anything less than a salesman of 100 per cent. efficiency.

Modern methods of traveling, communicating, and delivering have brought people closer together—have made competition keener. The mediocre merchant and the ordinary salesman are feeling this. They will feel it more in the years to come. The day of better retail merchandising has dawned. There is a future in it for those who are prepared to give a good account of themselves.

EXPERIENCE IS A GREAT TEACHER

But there are two kinds of experience—your experience and the accumulated experience of other people.

Don't try to learn everything through your own experience; some of the lessons will be too bitter, too costly, and too slowly learned.

Take every lesson you can from the experience of other people. Profit by their mistakes and successes. By so doing, you will be able to avoid many mistakes.

The fact that a copy of **SHORT TALKS ON RETAIL SELLING** has come into your pos-

session does not necessarily mean that you do not know much of what it teaches. Good for you if it merely echoes what you already know, for that means that you are an exceptional salesman!

SHORT TALKS ON RETAIL SELLING is merely a handful of lessons drawn from the experiences of retail salesmen everywhere. It will not hurt any one, and it should help thousands, for it is a noteworthy fact that altho the business world needs more salesmen than it needs bookkeepers and stenographers, and several other classes of clerical workers combined, so far there has been almost no effort on the part of schools to teach the great, interesting, and tremendously important business of selling. Selling, like every other thing worth while, has to be learned.

TWO WAYS OF LOOKING AT IT

The salesman was asking the traveling man confidentially if he knew of any good jobs open. "Nothing here for me," was

the answer when the traveling man asked what was wrong with the present job. A little later, the proprietor of that store asked the traveling man if he could put him next to a man who could make the most of a good opportunity there in the store—said the young man at present in the job wasn't alive to the possibilities!

Who was right?

It reminds us of the advertising man, who, on resigning, was asked by the boss to advertise for a successor. The ad. man's own advertisement about the possibilities of the job was so convincing that it changed his decision about leaving.

THE STEPS OF A SALE

Analyzing a sale from the scientific point of view, we find that there are just four steps, which are well represented by the following four words:

Attention.

Interest.

Belief.

Action.

Every exchange transaction does not necessarily include all of these steps. The customer may know the merchandise so thoroughly that he believes in it fully even before he enters the store. But in such cases the salesman can hardly be said to make a sale; it is rather a case of filling an order. Speaking from a salesmanship point of view, the word "sale" refers to a transaction where the salesman is called on to present the merits of the goods.

The attention must be favorable. Mark that. It is easy to get a certain kind of attention, but unless the attention is favorable, it counts for little or nothing. Advertisements, window-displays, and counter-displays aid greatly in securing favorable attention.

With favorable attention secured, it is the salesman's next task to develop that attention into interest, and to build up the customer's belief in the merit or desirability of the article. This may mean determining and removing various objections or doubts that are in the customer's mind,

and by that means securing his confidence.

If good work is done in drawing favorable attention, developing interest and inducing belief, there will be little effort needed to secure action from the customer and bring the sales transaction to a close.

HOW TO START A SALE

Many stores object to having a customer asked to buy, or to having a salesperson make a definite query as to what is wanted. Some stores have a strict rule that the customer must always speak first, the idea being that the customer should feel free to look around without any special intention to purchase, if he or she chooses. Many sales begin in this way that would never have been made if the customer had been repelled from the counter by an invitation to buy before having a definite intention to do so. But, on the other hand, many sales have been lost because those behind the counter stood indifferently by instead of showing interest and the desire to be helpful.

There is a golden mean between urging a customer to buy goods and evincing the interest and ability that will encourage the least intention of buying. The attentive salesman can usually tell, without difficulty, at what point in a customer's examination of goods on a counter it is well to ask if he can show the customer a particular size, or show a further assortment of such goods.

Very often the salesman, without even asking a question, can put down other goods for inspection with some quiet remark, as, "Here is another very pretty shade of green." Such attention can be given without assuming to watch the customer so closely as to embarrass the inspection of the goods.

If a woman enters a store hesitatingly and apparently with no clear idea of what she wants, the good salesman has his best opportunity for skilful salesmanship. He will evince a willingness to show goods unceasingly, but will try to find out by suggestive leads and tactful questions the

object for which the article to be bought is intended and the general taste of the customer. Then, when he has decided what in his stock will best fill these requirements, he will show his confidence. Some such remark as, "I have exactly the thing you are looking for," is often a pleasing introduction to the bringing out of an article that the salesman believes will please the customer.

The natures that act with timidity and uncertainty respond very gratefully to those who decide for them with dispatch, if they can be made to feel that their interests are considered.

Any one of a number of things may be appropriately said to the customer who indicates interest and a readiness to receive a suggestion from the salesman. The following—published originally in *Strawbridge & Clothier's Store Chat*—is offered as a good example: "May I show you your size in these gloves? They wear excellently, and are very low-priced at three dollars; the regular price is four dollars.

An important thing about these white gloves is they will clean very satisfactorily. Do you require long or short fingers? Do you like the broad white stitching on the backs?"

The unskilled, unthinking salesperson who ought to be in some other work may either stand still, without indicating the slightest interest in the possible customer, or may blurt out some tactless question, such as "Do you like those, ma'am?" or "Can I show you anything, Mrs.?" Or she may show by her manner that she does not believe the woman before her has sufficient means to afford a pair of twenty-button white gloves, altho they are selling at three dollars and are worth a dollar more. By her manner she may indicate that she has no time for "lookers," but is behind the counter to sell. Such a saleswoman can do incalculable harm to her store.

"Don't ask questions; show goods," is a bit of advice that one merchant urges on all his salesmen. "If the customer wants

to look at silks, don't ask her what kind and about what price she would like to see. Begin showing goods, and in that way get a hint as to what she wants. If she says she is partial to blue, don't ask what shade of blue, but show her various kinds of blues. Then you will very quickly be guided to what she most likes." The fact is that a judicious showing of goods, with a little carefully exprest comment, will often result in a sale of higher-priced goods than that the customer came in to buy. A dress-goods salesman, having put before a customer goods at eighty cents a yard that seemed to please her, said, "I want to see now if you don't like this even better." Then he put before her a superior piece of goods at a dollar a yard, saying, "This is twenty cents a yard more, but, as you see, it is worth the difference." He paused a while before measuring the eighty-cent goods, and the customer finally decided in favor of the dollar goods. Altho it is not well always to entice customers to buy the higher-priced goods, for

such a general policy would be harmful, this instance illustrates what can be done by quietly showing customers goods that, before seeing, they feel they do not want.

It is not good salesmanship to ask bluntly, "About what price do you want to pay?" or "Do you want a high-priced or a low-priced suit?" But this error is a very common one. It is a reflection on the customer to insinuate that she may not be able to buy the high-priced goods, and, anyhow, it is impertinent to ask what the customer is willing to pay before the goods have been shown. A person does not ordinarily go to a store for the purpose of spending a certain sum of money, but rather to look and then determine what to buy.

However, one can usually determine quite easily what class of goods a customer wants, and that with a compliment rather than a reflection on the ability to buy. If the salesman observes carefully the kind of clothes, jewelry, and decorations and millinery a woman wears, he can

get a very clear idea of the type of article that is most likely to suit her, and can save time in effecting the sale. It is comparatively easy to tell by the customer's costume and general manner whether she likes things that are gay or quiet, flashy or elegant, conservative or in the extreme of fashion. However, in this sizing up the salesman should be careful not to stare critically at the customer, who, if clad rather poorly, or possibly not in the latest fashion, and sensitive on that point, would at once be repelled by such action.

Having judged from externals as closely as he can, the salesman may make a start by showing somewhat higher-priced goods than the customer seems likely to want, saying, "Here is a very serviceable and dressy suit at \$40." If the price is higher than she is willing to pay, the customer will say so, and the salesman has his clue. But, generally speaking, it is better to err by showing the higher-priced goods than to reflect on the customer by showing low-priced goods, as if he or she

could not pay for better. Most people feel complimented by having the salesman show the better things to them, and every experienced salesman knows that it is a frequent occurrence to have people come in for low-priced goods and go away pleased at having bought something better.

DON'T SAY

Don't say "We ain't got none," or "We haven't got none." The grammatical wording is "We haven't any of that," or "We have none of that," and it is a good plan to include, "I am sorry." But don't be too quick to say you haven't things. You may really have them, or something else that would suit the customer.

Don't say "I seen it." Say "I saw it." It is correct to say "I have seen it."

Don't say "Do you want cheaper goods?" The word "cheap" suggests low quality. Refer to such goods as "lower-priced goods."

Don't say "A certain party was in here."

It is correct to speak of "an evening party," "a theater party," "a party of friends"; but say "the person I referred to," not "the party I referred to."

Avoid the common use of "lady" or "ladies" in commercial matter, particularly as an adjective; use "woman," "wife," "housekeeper," when these words can be used appropriately. Say "women's shoes," "housekeepers' sales," etc. "Saleswoman" is preferred to "saleslady."

The word "gentleman" is likewise to be used with care in commerce. In America, "men's overcoats" is ordinarily preferable to "gentlemen's overcoats," but the possessive forms of both "gentlemen" and "ladies" may be used with discrimination in referring to exclusive goods. In discussing social matters, it is all right, of course, to say "Fifty ladies and gentlemen were present."

It is exceedingly bad form to abbreviate "gentleman" to "gent." Never use such expressions as "gent's furnishing store," "lady and gent," "lady friend," "gentle-

man friend." Say "madam," not "lady," in addressing a woman.

IF WE COULD SEE OURSELVES

She was an old woman and she was very odd-looking—no doubt about that.

But she was a visitor—a guest of the store—and as such was entitled to the respectful and courteous consideration of all. No matter how odd-looking she might have been, it was the part of real ladies and gentlemen and real salesmen and saleswomen, to give no sign that her appearance was extraordinary.

What happened?

There were stares and smiles—even snickers. The attention not only of salespeople but of other customers was drawn to the quaint old figure. The store that minute fell in the estimation of the well-bred people who were present, and they probably spoke of the incident to others. The rudeness showed that the store lacked the restraint and respect that is characteristic of every well-ordered business.

It was too bad. The old lady was somebody's mother. How do you like to have your mother treated?

Resolve this: that no matter what others may do, you will have too much pride and self-respect to stare or smile in a way that may make others uncomfortable.

No, the old lady did not complain. She did nothing. She probably had too much dignity to let people know that she was in the least concerned as to what others thought of her. Maybe she said to herself: "I am glad that my daughters and granddaughters were too well-trained to stare or snicker as these young persons do."

IT'S A LITTLE THING, BUT——

it makes a lot of difference.

Did you ever go into a bank, a hotel, a store, or some other place, and have the person who attended to your wants greet you with "Good morning, Mr. Blank," or "Miss Blank"—that is, calling you by

your name instead of saying just "Good morning"?

Made you feel good, didn't it, to realize that you were known by name; to feel that you were somebody, instead of being merely one of the crowd.

Now, it is just that way with customers. You could do no little thing—and, you know, the big things of life are made up of the little things—that would have a better effect than this business of calling people by their names.

And you don't have to be blest with anything wonderful in the way of memory to do it. It is just a matter of paying close attention to names, and making it a point to remember them.

Another thing: it gives your answers to your superiors a little fine finish if you say, "Yes, Mr. Brown," instead of "Yes, sir" or merely "Yes."

People may not tell you that they notice these refinements of conversation and service, but be sure that such things stamp you as a person of superior training.

"I could do better work, but it wouldn't be noticed. So what's the use?"



MANY have said just that, and many more have thought it.

But it is dead wrong. In most cases, sooner or later, merit—like water—rises to its level.

You may not be told. You may not know it. But **SOMEBODY** knows what your real value is, and that somebody may be able to give you a helping hand when you least expect it.

Anyhow, you owe it to yourself to do at all times the best work of which you are capable.

That is the only way in which you can grow in ability. It is the only way to get happiness out of your work.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

This happened last summer, but it is one of those stories that is as good in cold weather as it is in warm weather or middling weather.

The Observer was going through Baltimore on a trip farther South when he remembered that there was a tiny hole in the big toe of his Can't-Wear-'Em-Out socks. It is embarrassing, you know, when you are away from home to discover that the hosiery manufacturer has betrayed his trust and allowed your toes to poke through. So, picking out a haberdasher that had an attractively arranged window (take note, Mr. Window-Dresser, if you please), the Observer walked in and asked for two pair of hose.

The "man on the job" was the proprietor himself, and he was one of those genial men—not familiar or "clever," but one whose manner showed that he took great pleasure in serving well. They say there are many of that sort in Baltimore.

"Is the size right?" asked the Obser-

ver when the merchant had handed out just the kind of socks wanted.

"Yes," said the other man, "I looked at your foot before I came around the counter. Few men know the size they wear, and so I usually take a look at the foot. You will find those just right."

"That's a good idea," said the Observer, remembering that once upon a time he had bought some socks that cramped his toes. "And, by the way, I almost forgot that I need another union suit."

"You will find this a nice garment," said the good salesman, as he spread out one of the "just right" kind. "And now don't you need a pair of garters?"

"By George, I do," said the Observer, and then he said to this creative salesman: "Would you mind telling me why you suggested garters—just the other thing I need? Why didn't you say—what the salesman would usually say—'Don't you need something else?' or rattle off a list of things so fast I couldn't stop to consider anything you said?"

Said the haberdasher with a smile: "You bought hosiery, and then you called for another union suit, remarking that you had almost forgotten that you needed it, and it seemed to me that the next thing you would be likely to need would be a pair of garters."

What a lesson he laid down. Most salesmen ask if there isn't "something else," and of course the natural impulse is to say "No." Other salesmen rattle off a list, as a matter of habit. Besides, the reciting of a list is a suggestion that the salesman is anxious to load up the customer with a string of purchases, and such suggestions are resisted instinctively.

The right way is the way the genial Baltimore haberdasher did it—to be keen and to study the needs or the probable needs of the customer before you, and to make thoughtful, definite suggestions. The customer appreciates such service. He considers what you say, and he buys that other thing that he otherwise might

not think of until he got a block down the street in front of your competitor's store.

Good for you, Mr. Baltimore Salesman! May your genial, thoughtful tribe increase, for it is a pleasure to buy from you.

* *

"Indeed we have!—a fine assortment."

This is what the enthusiastic little salesman said when the customer asked if the store carried a certain line of goods.

There are just six words in the sentence, but they stand for sixty. You can see a lot radiating from that little mouthful of words—confidence in the store, pleasure in the work, pride in the stock of goods carried, readiness to serve the customer well.

We need more of this enthusiasm. It is too common to see the salesman who stands around indifferently and hands out things with "yes" and "no." There is a chill going out from such a salesman, a chill that often makes the customer say

that she believes she won't buy to-day anyhow. It is too rare to see the enthusiastic salesman, he whose very first words hold the customer and awaken interest.

Enthusiasm is contagious. It makes sales grow, makes buying a pleasure for the customer, makes life worth living for the salesman, whether he lives in Detroit or Darbytown.

* *

It was in little old New York, where they say that both public service and private service are the worst ever. The Observer had nothing smaller than a \$5 bill in his pocket. Of course, this happened when he first struck New York, and before he had a chance to buy a meal there! He was somewhat fearful of handing out this "five-spot" to the street-car conductor, after having to make a beautiful aeroplane swoop in order to get aboard of one of those Broadway cars that no one has ever seen make a stop. He was imagining what a New York conductor would say if asked

to change a bill of that size. Remembering, however, that a soft answer turneth away wrath, he tendered the bill with one of his best smiles and the explanation that he was very sorry to have nothing smaller.

What did the conductor do?

"That's all right, sir," he replied—and don't forget he added the "sir"; "I am sorry I have to give you small change."

Doesn't it prove that, as a rule, you ~~get~~ pretty much what you look for? Be good-humored and courteous, and you will find it will bring the same kind of treatment from others most of the time. Even if it sometimes doesn't, your armor of good nature will protect you from insult or rebuff from those whose natures have become too soured to respond to courtesy.

* *

"What would you do?" asked a merchant of a speaker before a business club, "if you could not get your salespeople to keep themselves well informed as to what the store is advertising?"

"For one thing," answered the speaker, "I would see to it that every department of the store got advance notice of what was to be advertised every day."

"I do that," said the merchant, "but still it is common for saleswomen to tell customers that they do not know that such-and-such a thing was advertised."

"The first time a saleswoman was guilty of this fault," said the speaker, "I would go to her and kindly but firmly explain what she was in the store for. The second time it happened I would go to her and let her know that she was in the wrong place and would be better off cooking for somebody or doing some other work for which she was better fitted."

Does this hit you?

Wonder what the customer thinks when she finds salespeople that don't know what the store is advertising in their department.

* *

He is a big, good-natured negro who seems to find happiness in his job of wait-

ing well on the people who come into his dining-room. How I do like to see people take a pride in their jobs—whether they are meat-cutters or house-builders.

I ordered ribs of beef that day. As he brought the beef in and put the covered dish down in front of my plate, he said, "This is a nice dish to-day, sir." He said just that and no more, and then he took off the cover, and there was a savory looking portion of ribs of beef before me. It did look good, and it was good. Of course what he did was only a little thing, but what George, the good waiter, did was enough to make a simple meal something out of the ordinary. We will do well to remember how "George did it," for it's the little things that make the difference between the ordinary salesman and the good one.

BEST WAY TO RECEIVE MONEY

It is very embarrassing to have a dispute about the amount of money that the customer handed to you. Such unpleas-

ant situations can be avoided by always calling out the amount of the bill or coin that the customer hands to you.

Thus, if the bill is a \$2 bill, say: "Two dollars" when you take the money. Then if the customer should happen to think the bill was a \$5 bill, she will see her mistake before the money goes out of her sight.

Do you mind asking for money? You can suggest the handing over of the money skilfully if you will merely say, when the purchase is completed, "That will amount to \$2.75." Such a suggestion will bring the money without any direct request being made.

In handing back change, it is best to add from the amount of the purchase. Thus, if the purchase were eighty-five cents, and the bill presented were a \$5 bill, the change should be handed back and counted in this way: "Eighty-five cents, ninety (dropping the five-cent piece in the customer's hand), one dollar (giving her the dime), two dollars, three, four, five (giving her the four dollars)."

This method saves the customer from adding the amount of the purchase to the amount of the change, in order to be sure that the correct change has been given.

Stores nowadays have the printed "Thank You!" on various things; but, somehow, the printed thanks seem like "canned courtesy." The spoken "Thank you!" used advisedly, is the real oil that makes human machinery run smoothly.

Don't give any one a piece of your mind. You may need all of it.

Don't nurse your grievances. That is a sure sign of a small mind. If you really have a grievance, out with it, clear the atmosphere and go on. But maybe, after all, you have no real grievance. Just have a little talk with yourself over in the corner and see if you haven't been playing the baby instead of being a broad-gaged person.

THE DICKENS SPIRIT



“WHATEVER I have tried to do in my life,” wrote Charles Dickens, “I have tried with all my heart to do well.”

This simple, earnest explanation gives us one of the secrets of success of one of the world’s greatest writers.

Trying with all the heart to do the work well will be found to be a secret of every man’s success.

For trying with all the heart means thoroughness, and thoroughness is so rare a quality that it brings the highest market price.

Incidentally, the people who strive with all their hearts get more happiness out of their work—as well as more money.

GEORGE, CHARLIE AND JOE

The other day a department manager of my acquaintance resigned. He had been restless for a year.

But only one young man of the two dozen or more around that section of the store had been able to see how things were going and to get ready for the bigger job.

The day the announcement was made there was a grand rush to see "the old man." George, Charlie, and all the other boys wanted a show.

Joe said: "Mr. —, for a year I have been quietly fitting myself for the job. I can prove to you that I can take right hold and make good."

What did "the old man" do? Just what every other employer will do—he gave the job to the young man who had fitted himself for it.

George and Charlie feel sore because the long-headed man in the office didn't serve notice on them a year ahead that the department manager was likely to leave, so they could have prepared.

They are long on hindsight but short on foresight.

Are you a George, a Charlie, or a Joe?

HOW TWO MANAGERS MANAGED

There was trouble in the air from the first morning that the new manager took charge. Miss Burnett had been with the store five years, and she had hoped, when the former head of the section resigned, that the firm would give her the position of first responsibility. She believed she had managing ability, and she was keenly disappointed when it was announced that a new man had been engaged. She did not gossip her disappointment around, but, as is usually the case, looks spoke as loudly as words could have done. Baldwin, the new man, could feel the resentment when he was introduced to Miss Burnett along with the other members of his department. He wondered what had happened to set this keen-looking young woman against him.

Miss Burnett was too good a sales-

woman and too loyal an employee to allow her personal grievance to lower the quality of her work so far as customers were concerned; but the silent opposition continued. Baldwin's patient efforts to be pleasant met little encouragement, and he gave it up as a bad job, when he observed that the girls smiled covertly at the futility of his efforts to be agreeable to his chief assistant.

One day—a particularly trying day—the storm broke. Baldwin openly reprimanded Miss Burnett for not informing him of a condition that she knew existed. Miss Burnett took the reproof in haughty silence and waited. After closing hour she reopened the subject.

"I prefer to leave," said she, "rather than to remain here under present conditions, but before I go I am going to have the satisfaction of telling you that I believe I could manage this section better than you do."

She plunged on recklessly, rapidly relieving her pent-up feelings in the manner

of a displeased customer, but, feeling surprised, on the whole, to find so little satisfaction in speaking her mind to this unruffled man. At last she stopt, embarrassed and humiliated in the realization that she had so far lost control of herself.

"I do not doubt, Miss Burnett," he replied, quietly, "that you could do just as well as I have done in my short stay here, or even better. I have felt the need of help, felt the need of *your* help, and I do not know why you have been unwilling to give it to the fullest extent, but you have not done so. Something has been wrong. Maybe we misunderstand each other, altho really I have tried to make our relations pleasant.

"When I came here I wasn't sure it was the right job for me; however, I have two motherless little girls to support, and as it was an opportunity anyhow, I felt I ought to take hold and do the best I could. It may interest you to learn that already I have concluded to give up the place, and that I have made up my mind to tell the

firm that I believe you are fully competent to take charge. Our personal differences will not alter my decision to recommend you for the position; so let's be friends for the short time I will be around. I have always liked you."

He held out his hand, but Miss Burnett did not take it. She retreated a step, with wide-open eyes that suddenly filled with tears. The well-bred, generous woman rose magnificently above all petty spite.

"What have I done?" she exclaimed, passionately, and then, putting out both hands, she pleaded, "O, forgive me—I didn't know. I was just disappointed because they didn't give me the place at first, and I have been small and mean. I'd give so much if I could undo it all now. I can help you and will help you, if you will let me start all over again. I know I haven't been an example for the other girls, and I am ashamed of myself, but I'll do my best now. Can you forgive me?"

He forgave her. And he stayed.

Last month he told his housekeeper that

he would not need her services any longer, because he had found some one who could manage girls so well that he had decided to let her manage his own.

GIVE A FULL YARD BUT NO MORE

In measuring off goods priced from one to two dollars a yard, careless holding may easily put an extra half inch in a number of the yards or five or six inches in the entire purchase. This means a loss to the store of from sixteen to thirty cents. A hundred such transactions run the loss up to twenty or thirty dollars. The customer does not know that the store gave this over-measurement; it is a dead loss.

Give full measure, but make it exact. Let the nail of the thumb—not the thumb as a whole—mark the exact end of the yard. See that there is nothing under the goods to increase the length of the yard.

It is watching these little things that constitutes profitable merchandising.

Prove it to the boss in the sales total.

MISTAKES AND COURAGE

Do you lose courage sometimes? Everybody does. Saint Paul did, for we read that on a certain occasion he "thanked God and took courage." Losing courage isn't fatal, because we are wonderfully blest with the power to recover such things.

One successful man says that he never makes a mistake but that he says to himself, "Now, what can I learn from that?"

Take the lesson from the misstep or the misfortune. Think how much you have to be thankful for. Take a tighter hold on courage and move on.

THE RULES OF THE STORE

Make up your mind that you will obey the rules, letter and spirit. Sometimes you may not fully understand them—may think they are unnecessary or unjust. But there may have been some reason for making them that you know nothing of. Rules that might be unnecessary where only a few people are employed are often abso-

lutely necessary where scores or hundreds are employed. Until such time as the rules have shown themselves to be wrong, it is your business to obey. That's only loyalty. If you sneer, and evade what your employers ask you to do, others may be tempted to follow your example; and you will be spreading dissension.

"To obey is better than to sacrifice," says the Great Book.

If the heads of the business would let you see the checks for advertising bills sent to the newspapers every month, you would get an idea how much it costs to bring people into the store, and you would realize just how necessary it is to sell them when they do come in.

That irritable woman was a hard customer to serve agreeably, but you gain something invaluable every time you handle a case of that kind patiently and successfully.

PERSONALITY



IT'S a wonderful thing—this thing that we call personality—which includes your appearance, your manners, your voice, your conversation, everything about you that impresses you on those with whom you come in contact as an individual, different from every other per-son in the world.

You do not have to be beautiful to have a charming personality. You do not even need to be wonderfully clever, but you do have to be careful, courteous, clean, well-informed, ready always to be at your best and to give people your best. Personality has paved the way to fortunes. Are you developing yours to its fullest?

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

The Observer has bought a Victrola, and he is glad he bought, for the entertainment that it brings to him at the close of the day puts music into his soul and readjusts things.

But if the Observer hadn't already made up his mind to buy, the chances are that the indifferent salesmanship would have lost the talking-machine merchant a good sale. This is just the way it happened.

The Observer entered the store. Saleswoman stepped forward attentively—which was the proper thing to do—and asked: "Did you want something?"—which was a silly thing to do.

Why, oh why, do so many salesmen—and "salesmen" means saleswomen, too, if you please—persist in asking that stupid question of people who come into their stores? The Observer doesn't blame that sarcastic old man who, once upon a time, said in answer to that question, "No, of course, I don't want anything; I just came in to count the gas-jets."

But the Observer, tho a critic of selling methods, is a good-humored critic. He smiled at this nice-looking young woman and said, "Why, yes, I really believe I do want something. I have been thinking that it is about time for me to buy a Victrola."

Now what do you suppose came next? That second question which is rarely advisable to spring on the customer at once: "About what price do you want to pay?" Here was a room with instruments at five or six prices all around within ten feet of the salesman. The thing to do was, of course, to lead the customer up to the machines, demonstrate their different features and casually mention the prices. In this way, a clue would have been secured as to what price could or would be paid. How is the prospective customer, who may be entirely uninformed as to the values or prices of the instruments to know what price he wants to pay?

But the Observer smiled and said: "There is no special sum that I had in

mind that I wanted to get rid of. You might let me look at the different instruments and tell me about them and then I will decide which one I want."

The young woman saw something then, and she got down to business; but she wasn't long in blundering again. Maybe she doesn't care very much—is just holding her job until she is married. But I wonder if she ever stopt to think that the keen men—the men likely to provide the girls of their choice with nice homes—very often figure out that the thorough, conscientious saleswoman is more likely to be the thorough housekeeper and the helpful mate than the indifferent girl.

"Is the lower case mahogany or birch?" queried the Observer.

"I—I don't know about that," was the answer, "but I guess it isn't mahogany. I think it is probably birch."

But now to be perfectly fair and accurate, she did one proper thing. "Wouldn't you like to hear the tone of this instrument?" The Observer said that he would,

and then he thought to himself: "Here is where the fine work begins. She is going to ask me what piece of music I would like to hear."

But that didn't come. Schumann-Heink's "Holy Night" was put on, and a good demonstration record it was; but there was something else that the Observer preferred hearing.

The saleswoman's advice as to the comparative tone value of the different instruments was directly contrary to the advice given to one of the Observer's acquaintances at the same store. In fact, when the manager came in and took part in the sale, his advice differed from what the saleswoman had said; and as the result, the Observer trusted neither but made them take up time in demonstrating several instruments several times.

Yes, the Observer bought, but largely because he had decided to buy a Victrola even before he entered the store; and nothing short of extremely rank work would have kept him from buying.

How much better it is for both customer and salesman if the customer feels when he leaves the store; "My, but these people are on their jobs. It's a pleasure to do business with such thorough salesmen."

Don't think that because you are not selling Victrolas there is not a lesson here for you. It makes little difference what you are selling—whether lawn-mowers, hosiery or salt mackerel: don't expect the customer to flash a ten-dollar bill and say, "I want to spend this." Show your goods, show your goods, show your goods; bring out their good points as skilfully as you know how, and the first thing you know the sale is made without any forcing at all.

* *

There's a big difference in the way salesmen give out information.

Some give it with a superior air as if the poor customer were an ignorant boob that the salesman ought to "show up." Others give information as it should be given, in a pleasant, unassuming way.

Not long ago the Observer wanted something in the way of a pair of pincers or pliers. He didn't know exactly what to call the thing he wanted, but he knew what it looked like, and so he dropt into a hardware store that has a group of as well-informed, obliging salesmen as were probably ever gathered in one place of its size. Using his fingers as models, he described to the salesman the tool he wanted.

"Yes, Mr. Observer," said this salesman—he knew the name, just as he knows the name of everybody else that comes into the store regularly, "that's a plier; that's what we call the "gas-plier." And he said it in such a nice way that the Observer stood there a moment, chatting; his eye fell on a display of hatchets and it reminded him that he wanted one.

This on-to-his-job salesman put a piece of cardboard over the sharp blade of the hatchet before wrapping it. A little thing! No, it wasn't. We call such things little things but they are big things, for they turn shopping from disagreeable jobs into

errands of real pleasure, and any one who does that is an artist—a genius.

* *

“It is a good thing,” says a skilful clothing salesman, “to let the past alone. I make it a rule never to ask a customer of mine how the last suit he bought from us pleased him. If he liked it, what’s the use of saying anything about it, and if he didn’t like it, the raking up of the transaction may prove to be a snag in the next sale. Of course if I knew that the customer was actually dissatisfied, I’d try to find out what the trouble was and to fix it up, but I never voluntarily give a customer the chance to say ‘That was the poorest suit you ever sold me.’ In other words, I don’t search for trouble.”

“About what price did you want to pay?” asked the salesman. Replied the customer: “I can probably buy anything in your store that strikes my fancy.” Yes, the salesman saw the point.

HANDLING THE SHOPPER'S FRIEND

A salesman says:

"I am bothered often by the friend of the shopper—she who comes along without any intention of buying but just to find fault and advise. Yesterday, for example, a woman came in who had very little to say as to her likes and dislikes, but her companion would comment freely. She would say, 'Oh, you don't like that,' 'I wouldn't buy that,' etc. What ought I to do in a case of this sort? Be rude?"

No, you should not be rude. It is difficult to say *exactly* what you should do, because the way that would be best one day with two guests of the store might not be the best way with two other guests. Good salesmanship always means a careful consideration of the individual or individuals before you, and there are considerably more than fifty-seven varieties of people! You might try in a case of this kind to direct your canvass to the real customer, and you can often go so far as to say tactfully, "Madam, despite the fact

that your friend here does not like this suit, it looks to me as if it is exactly right for you. Now, just see for yourself how it looks. After all, you know, you are the one to be pleased with the suit—not your friends.”

There are occasions, altho, when the real customer relies so much on the other person's judgment that it is necessary to sell to the companion, as it were, and through her make the sale to the customer. This is a matter to be determined by the circumstances.

If the companion is really a good critic, it may help to pass a judicious compliment on her judgment. Flattery is dangerous but honest compliments sometimes help wonderfully.

DON'T SAY

Don't say “Lady, you have dropt your glove.” This is a cheap use of the word “Lady”; use “Madam” instead.

Don't say “I ain't” or “We ain't.” Say “I haven't,” “We haven't,” “We are not,” etc.

Don't say "awful nice," "awful stylish," "awfully hard wear." You shouldn't try to use big and unusual words, but do try to use words that stand for something. Study the following: "a quiet color," "a striking color," "a distinctive style," "unusual quality," "very durable," "a simple design that you would never tire of."

Don't say "That there waist"; say "This" or "That" without "there."

Don't say "Them goods"; say "These goods" or "Those goods."

Be careful how you say "Hello," "Hello there," "Come here." In speaking to equals or to superiors it is much better to say "Good morning," "How are you?" "Will you come here, please," "Please come here," etc.

MORE PLAIN DON'TS

Don't stare into vacancy or stand around indifferently when the customer is before you.

Don't linger to finish your chat with a fellow worker when a customer is in

view. Approach the customer immediately with a willing look and the little forward movement that indicates readiness to serve.

Don't quarrel or jest with other salespeople in the presence of the customer.

Don't yawn, assume a bored look, or, what is worse, an air of condescension.

Don't divide your attention; give your entire interest to the work at hand.

Don't lean wearily on the fixtures.

Don't chew gum, fix your hair, pare your nails, or eat during working hours.

Don't answer curtly.

Don't carry on an ill-spirited argument with a customer. Talk quietly and reasonably and even regretfully when the customer becomes unreasonable or angry and talks loudly.

Lead the way for the customer, but always let her enter the elevator ahead of you. In case a closed door must be opened, hold back the door for the customer to pass through.

GETTING A RUNNING START

The salesperson who commands confidence and interest at the outset gets a running start toward making the sale.

The psychologist, the smart gentlemen who write books about the make-up of the human mind, how it works, and so on, tell us some things that are hard to understand. But they make one clear enough for everybody selling goods to understand. That is this: *The sale is made first in the customer's mind.* To put it another way, the customer revolves the whole matter over in her mind and comes to a decision to buy before any decision is announced.

Now to get this decision in the customer's mind, everything that can be done in the way of keeping the customer's thoughts moving in the right direction ought to be done. If you combat the customer's ideas, get her displeased or confused, your chance of making a sale immediately becomes less.

A customer usually comes to the store with something special in her mind.

Let's say that it's a brown sweater. Now you may think red sweaters or green sweaters are much prettier than brown ones, but for some reason or other that is really none of the store's business the customer is interested particularly in brown sweaters. By showing brown sweaters, if you have any, you immediately command her interest. You have shown respect and courtesy for her preference—and that she is entitled to.

Having shown her the color she asked for, if she does not seem satisfied with what you have put before her, it is perfectly proper to show other colors tactfully. Possibly, after all, she may see something that she really prefers to the original color named. But the point is that when a customer has a decided preference for something, that preference is a big start toward a sale, and you should cater to it, if possible.

A good morning prayer—Lord, give me this day a good balance-wheel.

MAKING SALES EASY

The *Saturday Evening Post* recently told how one salesman succeeded in selling a new piece of goods to almost every one he approached, while another salesman, apparently just as earnest, failed almost every time.

The difference was just this:

The unsuccessful salesman did not demonstrate the article—which was a mechanical device. He tried to put the sale through on talk alone, and he talked “buy, buy, buy” instead of showing just what the article would do.

The other salesman said very little but he showed quickly how the article worked and then put it in the customer’s hands, encouraging him to try. The little that this salesman said was about the service the article would give. He did not have to say “Buy it,” because when he had shown the features of the article, the customer was usually ready to buy without argument.

Now, “demonstration” merely means

showing what the thing will do, bringing out its features. That may mean snapping the cloth to show its strength, or it may mean running the hands over smooth things to show the smoothness, or it may mean thumping a ball into a baseball mitt for the small boy's benefit or having a waist or a suit tried on to show the fit and the becomingness. It means getting action—making the customer actually see the merit of the merchandise.

By demonstrating, you can command the attention of the customer in a way that you can never do by merely pointing to things and talking about them. Furthermore, the actual handling of the goods stimulates within the customer, as a rule, the desire to own. It is always a distinct advantage to have the customer operate the article if it is something she can be trusted to handle or operate.

One salesman of bed-springs points out a certain kind of spring and explains how strong and yet how springy such a bed is. Another salesman makes good use of that

little demonstrating section of spring furnished by the manufacturer. He gets on that demonstrator and jumps up and down. The customer may or may not believe the statements of the first salesman, but there is no hesitancy about believing the second salesman, for he shows rather than tells.

There's a kind of salesmanship that we might call good-will salesmanship—the kind that makes customers feel that our store, for some reason or other, is the most satisfactory place in town to come to. We can create that feeling only by giving genuine service, by treating every person who comes into the store as if that were the only customer we had for the day.

If all salespeople would strive every hour of the day to make shopping a pleasant errand for everybody, a great problem of retailing would be solved.

THE EXTRA-POLITE SALESMAN



TO paraphrase a paper-manufacturer's slogan, "He is a little more polite than seems necessary."

And yet there is no suspicion of gush or of fawning in his manner. The courtesy is all genuine. Whether he was born with a naturally courteous disposition or acquired it from the training of a very fine mother does not matter. He has the great asset. He steps aside for superiors or elderly persons; he remembers to say, "Thank you" and "If you please"; he listens attentively, he moves quietly, and has all the little refinements of good breeding.

He stands head and shoulders above his fellows, and I believe that his rare courtesy accounts for it.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

The Observer has just finished reading a fine little book called "The Telephone Smile." It is really a handbook on telephone salesmanship put out by one of the biggest stores of the East for the purpose of making shopping by telephone as agreeable and convenient as possible.

That title, "The Telephone Smile," is fine. It emphasizes the idea that we need in our telephone talk just the cordiality and the willingness that we show or that we ought to show when we deal with people face to face.

It's a curious trait of human nature, isn't it, that we will do lots of things when we are not facing people that we wouldn't think of doing if we were looking into the eyes of the one that we are talking to.

It is so easy to yank down the receiver—yank expresses it, doesn't it?—and call out in a bored or impatient way, "Well," "What is it?" "Wait a minute," "Wrong number," "Wrong department," etc. These expressions are short to the point

of curtness anyhow, and usually the tone makes them worse.

Now, just remember this: the person at the other end of the wire—don't call him a "party" or think of him as a party—can not see your face. He is not gifted with mind-reading powers and is not going to imagine that you are an agreeable person, eager to serve him and your employer well, unless you show it. There is just one sense brought into use in telephoning—that of *hearing*, and if you don't put the smile into your tone, the customer won't get it.

Do you get that—the "voice with the smile in it"? The Observer knows a case where a young woman of unusually good nature gets two or three extra dollars a week just because of her ability to put the smile into her voice. It's too bad that a word-picture of her simple "hello" can not be put here but it can't be done. Her cheery greeting is not gushy, it is not affected, but it has music and mellowness to it. Its charm as it comes over the cold

wire suggests that may be she has just come in from a walk over the dewy fields on a bright sunshiny morning and brought some of the good cheer into the office with her. You get just those two musical syllables and you instantly know that there is somebody at the other end glad to get your message, glad to serve you well; and you think well of that office.

Never mind if Nature didn't give you the sweet mellowness that this young girl has in her voice. Just put real courtesy, the spirit of real service, into your answers; and the smile will be there.



You have heard about the sixth sense, of course—that instinct that enables us to see through sham.

Everybody has some of this sixth sense, and there isn't much use of pretending to be serving well when you are really not doing so. You are probably not fooling the other person any more than you are fooling yourself.

The Observer was in a hat store the other day. The salesman that came forward was one of these bluffing, flattering fellows. You know the kind; "Just the thing this year, old man—looks great on you. Don't like it? Humph, that's strange. Everybody's buying them." And the Observer was saucy enough to say, "But everybody's not going to wear the hat I buy. I am going to wear it."

Then there is another hat store, where there is a quiet, conscientious fellow who sizes you up and brings out several hats somewhere near right for a man of your build and age. The Observer tried on first one and then another and was pleased to see that Mr. Real Hat Salesman showed no disposition to rush things. "That hat," said he finally, "looks pretty well on you, but it is just a little too big a hat, I think, for a man of your build. That hat is well suited to the judge with the bushy head that went out as you left; but here is the hat I'd rather see you buy, altho of course, now, you'll take the one you want."

His judgment was sound and he was thanked for his real service. He knew hats. Maybe he doesn't sell as many some days as the clever sport in the other store, but as long as the Observer lives in the town where Mr. Real Hat Salesman does business, that store will get one man's business.

* *

Yes, indeed, it is a great thing to be able to talk well, but do you know that *good listeners* are even rarer than good talkers.

Isn't it a delightful experience to run across some one who will listen attentively and understandingly to just what you say—who will not let attention wander for a moment. You know how you feel when the other person looks absent-minded or diverted, or breaks in before you have said what you wanted to say.

A lot of poor sales-work and other kinds of poor work may be explained by the simple fact that people do not force themselves to listen keenly.

You forget, do you? Well, you probably need no memory system to help you to remember. Just try the plan of listening well.

The greatest compliment you can give people is to listen carefully and sympathetically to what they have to say. Keen listening means that you will get the best possible idea of what the situation is and that you will know how to proceed.

"Talked to death" might appropriately be made the epitaph of many a lost sale.

Give the customer a chance, and listen! That's what your ears were made for.

"Good morning!" and "Thank you!" They are simple things to say but so often they smooth the way to a good beginning or leave the other person with a pleasant little recollection of the interview. Don't be stingy with your "Good mornings" and your "Thank you's." Say them clearly and graciously. Say them for your own sake as well as for the other fellow's.

IF YOU WERE BOSS



WHAT is there going on around your section of the store that you could and would improve?

Would you stand for ignorance of stock, careless handling of it, inattention to work, for waste of time and materials, for careless, untactful dealing with customers?

A Cleveland writer tells of a young man who once spent a little time figuring what he would do if he were boss—who PUT HIS THINKING INTO PRACTISE, and who was soon in a position of greater responsibility.

Wasn't strange, was it? The same thing could happen to SOME ONE ELSE.

OVERCOMING DIFFIDENCE

Don't be distressed over the fact that you have a diffident, sensitive nature. It is a weakness to be overcome, of course, but you are much more blest than people of the opposite type—those who have “brass enough to run a foundry.” You at least have a fine-grained nature, and tho it may be too ready to receive impressions, you see and feel much more of the better things of life than the nervy person who seems never to know when he is tiresome or annoying.

“Introspection,” which is a good-sized word that stands for the art of looking within and studying yourself, is a fine thing so long as you don't go too far and find so much fault with yourself that you stunt your own growth. It is an old saying that a fault realized is a fault half corrected; so you can count yourself lucky that you know your own faults and are not obliged to wait until some outraged person takes you by the ears and shouts them in your face.

Diffidence and supersensitiveness are faults that can be overcome. In the first place, they rest on a false basis. If you are diffident or sensitive, you imagine that people are paying a great deal more attention to you than they really are doing. There is absolutely no doubt of this.

There is absolutely no doubt of another thing—that you have the will-power to overcome your fault. All you have to do is to resolve and keep on resolving that you will overcome it, and then don't keep the fault in your mind but just go ahead and lose yourself in your work. Diffidence fades like mist before the morning sun when you get enthusiastic about your work.

One of the best salesmen of New York City says that when he first took up outside selling work after having been for a long time in an office position he would sometimes walk up and down before a place of business before he could screw up enough courage to go in and talk his proposition. But he knew that was fool-

ishness. He knew that he "averaged up" pretty well with other folks and he made up his mind that he would jump right at his job day in and day out and keep so busy that he wouldn't have time to think about his self-consciousness. Of course he conquered it. He never became a loud, self-assertive salesman. He didn't need to become one of that type; it is fast going out of fashion. But he became a conservative, quiet, well-mannered gentleman whose words and actions bespeak earnestness and conscientiousness; and that's the kind of salesmen people want to do business with to-day.

You can do it, too. Use that will of yours.

Think about your work, and the *self* business will soon settle itself.

KNOW WHAT'S ADVERTISED

The advertisements of the store won't sell goods. They just draw people within the doors. Then the job is one for the salesmen and saleswomen. They must be-

gin where the advertisements left off—must know where the advertised goods are, and show them intelligently and enthusiastically.

The store has provided a way by which you may know just what goods of your section are advertised. See to it that you are familiar with every item.

Nothing so hinders a sale as to have a salesperson look blank when certain advertised articles are mentioned. Customers will naturally expect the people of the store to be familiar with the styles and values that are worth advertising. If they are not, who can blame the customer for leaving in disappointment or disgust?

Study the advertisements!

THE INDIRECT COMPLIMENT

It is good salesmanship to say pleasing things when they can be said truthfully, but a good deal of tact is necessary in saying pleasing things of a personal nature.

Some customers are quick to resent the compliments or personal opinions of sales-

people, and often they are quite within their rights in so doing.

If the customer asks: "How do you like this coat on me?" it is perfectly proper to answer, "I like the effect very much," that is, if you really do. But to say, "That is just the thing for you," without being invited to pass such a personal opinion, borders on impertinence.

Now there is a right way of accomplishing the end, as there usually is a right way of doing everything. If the customer is a fairly tall woman she will be interested to hear that "This model was designed especially for tall figures."

As Edna Collamore says, "This puts the emphasis on where it belongs, on the coat rather than on the wearer."

"A man of broad shoulders can't get a more striking coat than that" is not likely to give offense, while, "You have such fine shoulders" will not be pleasing except to the man who is easily flattered.

Practise the indirect compliment. It is a part of the fine art of selling.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

The Observer was in a busy food market the other day and along with his buying he gathered two real lessons.

A chicken huckster was selling his wares. How enthusiastically he did hold up his chickens by the feet while he talked of their weight and quality! "He's a fine fat fellow," he would say. He usually got the customer to give the chicken "a heft," too, evidently knowing that a sale is easier made when you can get the customer to handling and inspecting the article. This huckster knew chickens; he believed in the quality of *his* chickens; he demonstrated enthusiastically; and he sold chickens. That's about all there is to salesmanship.

* *

The other lesson was gathered at the celery stand. A customer had picked out an apparently fair bunch, but the salesman stopt her. "That isn't a very good bunch, madam. I'd rather you would take this one. We like, you know, to have every-

body pleased when they get home with their purchases."

The customer also knew a thing or two, for she said: "Thank you," and then she added, "You know and I know that that is good merchandising. What a pity it is that more people don't know it."

Making a friend for the store with every purchase—what a great idea is wrapt up in that thought. There are not many businesses that could continue if the customer bought just once and never came back. Profitable merchandising means making every sale such a pleasant and satisfactory transaction that the customer goes away highly pleased with the goods and the service, will continue to have pleasant thoughts of the store and the salesperson, and will come back again voluntarily when he or she has need of something else that the store has for sale.

If you are looking for a motto for success, you can't beat—"A friend for the store with every purchase."

The Observer was reading some athletic comments the other day and was struck with this criticism of a ball-player whose work for several years commanded considerable attention: "He seems more passive—does not look as keenly interested as he once was—and his speed has consequently let down."

No matter what it is—ball-playing, manufacturing, preaching, selling goods, or something else, when people get passive and are not keenly interested in their work, their "speed" is sure to let down. The only way to play the game as it ought to be played is to concentrate on it with all your heart and energy, to be active rather than passive. Then you can show your true speed and get somewhere.

* *

Speaking about passiveness: the Observer was in a china section of a big store last week, watching two saleswomen work. One merely followed cus-

tomers around and answered questions when customers insisted on having a little information. You know the type! The other young woman was pleasingly active and yet not too much so. Now and then she used the electric bulb to show the quality of a certain piece. She was quick to see the trend of the customer's preference and would lead to goods of that kind. She knew her goods, too—knew how to talk about the dainty patterns, etc. Is there any need to answer the question of who sold the goods in that department?

* *

She seemed to be an alert girl, but the superintendent noticed that buttons were missing off her shoes. Nevertheless, he was still in doubt until along in the conversation she said "them goods." That settled it. The store could not afford to have salespeople saying "them goods," "I seen," etc., to its customers.

And then there were two boys apply-

ing for positions. One was clean and bright, and he said, "yes, sir," never failing to add the "sir." The other boy was neatly drest, but he had just a little look of sulkiness or unwillingness in his face, and his finger-nails were black. The superintendent did the unexpected thing. Perhaps he felt called on to do a little missionary work. He said: "Why don't you keep your finger-nails clean? Do you suppose we would have anybody behind our counters with fingers like yours?" The young fellow blushed and muttered, clenched his hat and walked out.

After all, this success business is largely a matter of the survival of the fittest. Would you climb the ladder? Then look to your speech, your dress, your personal cleanliness, your manners.

Yes, it is worth while having the customer look at the end of the transaction as if she felt obliged to you for making her shopping so satisfactory and pleasant.

WORDS COMMONLY MISUSED

SAYS.—The expressions “I says” and “he says” are frequently used with reference to the past; the correct forms are “I said” and “he said.” In fact, “I says” should never be used, the form for present time being “I say.”

THEM FOR THOSE OR THESE.—“Them” is commonly used in error for “those” or “these”; say “those goods” or “these goods,” not “them goods” or “them there goods.”

THEY, THERE.—“They” is sometimes improperly used for “there.” “They (There) is no way to do it.”

THIS HERE, THAT THERE.—We should say “this man,” not “this here man”; “that sample,” not “that there sample.”

THOSE KIND, THESE KIND.—A very common error is the use of “those kind” or “these kind” for “that kind” or “this kind.”

WENT, GONE.—Say “He has gone,” not “He has went”; it is correct, however, to say “He went.”

THAT VOICE OF YOURS

One of the very first things that impresses the customer is the salesperson's voice. When the customer approaches, the greeting of the salesperson makes a quick impression, good, bad, or indifferent, according as the voice is pleasing, discordantly loud, annoyingly shrill, provokingly mumbling, or something else.

Now, then, of course it goes without saying that all of us can not have the most musical and agreeable voices, but the plain truth is that most of the disagreeable quality in voices comes from careless habits. The person who yells and who disturbs everybody fifty feet away could tone down his voice if he would only try to do so. And the owners of shrill voices would be less like magpies if they wouldn't try to talk at a gait of 250 words a minute, but would curb themselves and thus get breath to put a little more fulness into their tones.

A good many people in this world of ours talk as if their mouths were full of

rice pudding or mush. Instead of manipulating their lips and tongues so as to articulate clearly, they loll their useful talking apparatus around most shamefully. Talk to yourself in the mirror now and then and you will see what I mean. If you are guilty of the bad habit of mouthing and mumbling, try to overcome it, even if you talk less. Most of us could reduce our talking one-half and get along better.

You can't talk and giggle at the same time. Nor was it intended that a big wad of gum, or a pencil or a bunch of pins should be in the mouth while the talking operation is in progress.

There is a wonderful difference in the way that people say "Good morning." Some say it as if, indeed, it is a wonderful morning. The lopped-off "Morning!" of others has a sort of cur-dog-bark finish to it.

Your voice is a precious possession. Study it. Find its faults. Give it a chance to truly represent your character.

THE CUSTOMER'S ATTITUDE

"I used to think," says a successful retailer, "that people were exceedingly cranky, that they made much ado over little things, and that I was often justified in squelching them. And then one day I began to wonder if there wasn't a great deal of difference between the point of view of the person behind the counter and that of the one in front of it.

"I began to analyze my own feelings as I went to other stores to buy things—the goods that *my* money had to be spent for. I found that I often had some special article in mind. Maybe it was no better than other goods of a similar kind, but I had set my mind on that particular thing, and I found that I expected salespeople to take an interest in my needs as I stated them, that I wanted time to examine the details carefully and to compare the article first called for with other articles.

"I discovered that when it was my money that was being spent and that

when I was the person that had to wear or use the merchandise bought, I was as cranky, as hard to please, as easily affronted by neglect or poor salesmanship as the crankiest crank that ever paused before my counter back in the good old store that brought me my salary.

“When I made this discovery I went back to the store a superior salesman. Thereafter I tried to put myself in the customer’s place, and I think I discovered one of the great secrets of salesmanship.”

Study out the most effective way of demonstrating your goods and watch your sales-total grow.

Don’t deceive yourself, because you are really not deceiving the customer when you pretend to be giving attention while all the time your mind is on something else. You can tell when others give you this sort of attention (?). The customer is just as perceptive.

JUST BE THOROUGH

EVERY successful man and woman I ever knew or heard about was a thorough worker.

You don't have to be popular or pretty to win business laurels.

Just think about and do well the things that others have to be told to do.

Just know your goods a little better than "the average."

Be a little more energetic, enthusiastic, and attentive, a little more courteous, a little more loyal.

See things through to a fine finish every time—every day.

That's thoroughness and that's happiness. It's what we always call success—and sometimes genius.

THE WHOLESALE HABIT

There are certain kinds of goods that people buy regularly and that they can buy more economically by purchasing a fair quantity at a time.

Here's a canned food, we will say, that sells at ten cents a can or three cans for twenty-five cents. The woman who asks the price can probably use three cans just as well as one. She will save five cents by so doing, as well as another errand, and your store will capture the sale of two cans that might otherwise go to your competitor around the corner.

There are a great many goods on which a quantity price is made, so many for twenty-five cents, so many for fifty cents, or an attractive lot for one dollar.

Of course, this must be kept in mind—that customers do not come to a store to be pestered into buying things that they can't use to advantage or more than they can use. But I am talking about goods that they are certain to be able to use to advantage. What's the use of one

cake of serviceable soap being bought at five cents if half a dozen cakes can be had for twenty-five cents.

It costs money to bring customers into the store. The customer before you, interested in the goods, presents a golden opportunity. Sell her as much as she can use to advantage. At least be salesman enough to give her the opportunity to buy the larger quantity at the more attractive price: "These are forty cents each or three for a dollar" puts the matter up to her in a salesmanship way.

YOUR EYES

The Great Book has something to say about those who "having eyes, see not." What was true when those words were written seems to be just as true nowadays.

I suppose I have had a shave or a hair trim from at least a thousand barbers in my life.

My way of brushing my hair is not very peculiar, but I can not recall more

than two barbers out of the thousand who brushed my hair, when he got through, the way I like it. I asked one of these lonesome two how he happened to hit it right, and what do you suppose he said? "I always look at a man's hair when he first sits in my chair, so as to see how he brushes it."

Just used his eyes, that's all.

What applies to barbers applies to salespeople and others. It is said of a great detective that he seems to take in everything in a room at a glance as soon as he enters. His keen observation enables him to act with tact and certainty where other people would guess and blunder.

The customer is full of suggestions for you if you will only observe keenly. Of course it goes without saying that you ought to do your observing without any appearance of staring or of inquisitiveness. The customer's dress indicates clearly the taste of the person. There are some exceptions to this rule. Some

times people who do rough work and who go about looking rather ordinary are in the market for the best class of goods. Hence it will not do to jump to conclusions from a mere glance. The Great Book right where it comments on those who having eyes see not also has something to say about those who "having ears, hear not."

Are you using eyes and ears to the best advantage in determining what will please customers?

Don't let a customer go away dissatisfied without referring the matter to some one higher in authority.

A well-located store pays a heavy rent, or a heavy tax, for its windows. This space and the space bought for advertising purposes in the newspapers and elsewhere cost a large sum of money. Study out ways and means of making that investment bring proper returns.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

Here is an interesting item that the eye of the Observer caught right away the other evening as he settled down to get the day's news:

MRS. SAYRE LOSES HER
PURSE

EMBARRASSED WHILE SHOPPING, BUT
CLERK OFFERS WHOLE STORE

NORTH ADAMS, MASS., March 3d—Mrs. Francis B. Sayre, daughter of President Wilson, will probably remember for some time her first shopping trip to this city since starting housekeeping at Williamstown.

After making a few purchases in a local store she discovered with some signs of confusion that her pocket-book had been left at home. Mrs. Sayre blushed as she explained her predicament.

Upon learning his customer's identity the clerk soon put her at ease, however, by saying "That will be all right, Mrs. Sayre; we would gladly trust you for the whole store if you wanted it."

Now, of course, this quick-witted salesman, who handled an embarrassing situation so cleverly for his employer, did not have to credit the daughter of the President for the "whole store." That was just his gentlemanly, hearty way of putting the thing. As a matter of fact, he did not have to get any special authority for what he did.

This SALESMAN—the capital letters are merited—realized that he represented the store and that a distinguished guest was being served. He had *initiative*. He had a head on him. And he used it in doing the right thing, the gracious thing, on his own account, without having to be coached. Result, his store is getting valuable publicity.

Go where you will, you will find employers yearning for salespeople of this kind, and you will find also employers weary, almost to discouragement, over the small proportion of young people who have the quality of going ahead with initiative and doing things the right way.

The stock in that kind of shoe was low, and it was easy to see that the saleswoman had a problem before her when the customer asked for an exact duplicate of the shoe she had on. But this saleswoman had the gumption to know that very often, even when people are pleased with a certain kind of article that they have been wearing, something else may be found that will suit just as well or better. She didn't have the customer's size in the last called for, but she skilfully demonstrated two other shoes that were close to what the customer sought. She got the customer to try them on, and that without undue insistence.

But the customer would have nothing but the last that had given such good satisfaction. As she rose to go, the Observer watched to see if the sale would be lost to the store. It looked as if it would be. But the resourceful saleswoman said: "If we could get them for you by the end of the week, wouldn't that do? We could send in an order to-

day to the factory and have them delivered specially by parcel post." She had her book ready, and the thing was fixt up in a jiffy. Such is real salesmanship.

A customer costs too much for one ever to be lost—if the loss is at all avoidable.

* *

How long, wonders the Observer, is it going to take salespeople everywhere to learn that it is cheap and crude to say, "This is a fine piece, mister," "Here is just what you want, Mrs.," or "Don't you like this, ma'am?" "Ma'am" is hardly as crude as "mister" and "Mrs.," used alone. Neither "mister" nor "Mrs." should be used unless the name of the customer follows. If the name is unknown, say "sir" or "madam." Of course the Class A salesperson will acquire the names of customers as far as possible, for the customer is always pleased to be remembered by name.

"Take it home and if you don't find it exactly what you want, we will exchange it for you gladly." This was not said in a cut-and-dried way, but with genuineness, and it made the sale. After all, it is not so much what you do, but the way you do it, that counts.

Measuring the foot or the hand carefully may not be absolutely necessary in order to give the customer an excellent fit in shoe or glove, but it does this: it impresses the customer, at the outset of the transaction, that you want to give good service. It immediately creates confidence, and you can't beat that as a foundation for a sale.

Once upon a time there was a shoe salesman who was so diplomatic that when a customer asked if one of her feet was not a little larger than the other he ducked neatly and replied that, on the contrary, one foot was a bit smaller than the other!

WISHING AND WORKING



MOST people would like to have success if it could be caught as one catches measles—if it could be secured by having some benevolent soul pass it down as a gift.

Few are willing to dig for success—to be alert and eager, to concentrate and sacrifice, and to work a little longer and do their tasks a little better than necessary.

But success always comes as a conquest, not as a bequest. It's more a matter of pluck than of luck.

Other people can't hand over experience and well-paid ability to you as they could a yard of cloth or a basket of potatoes.

The winning of success is a personal battle, and you will appreciate the reward only by working hard and honestly for it.

A PAIR OF SILK STOCKINGS

This young man didn't seem to be of the fresh, sporty variety, nor did he have the hurried, harried look of the married man sent on a shopping errand by his wife. He was just a frank, honest-looking fellow.

He seemed somewhat embarrassed as he drew up to the counter of the Hosiery Section, and Miss Brennan felt instinctively that her first observation of him did not give her the measure that she usually took of her customers. Clearly, he was on a new errand, and it was the part of the skilful saleswoman on the other side of the counter to help him out. So she turned with her agreeable, encouraging look.

"I want to get a pair of real nice silk stockings—ladies' stockings, you know—for a present?" he began.

"Yes," said Miss Brennan. "Now, would you like something in a color or do you prefer the plain black or white?"

"Really, I don't know just what to

get," replied the young man, his embarrassment increasing rather than decreasing, "and I would be greatly obliged to you for advice."

"Certainly," was the reply, and then after a pause, "do you wish them for your wife or for a sister or——?" Right there Miss Brennan, usually very resourceful, found herself at her rope's end and began to feel a little embarrassed herself, for she could not imagine this type of young man sending silk stockings as a sentimental reminder to a young woman other than a sister.

"Oh, no, I'm not married, miss, and of course buying things of this kind is somewhat out of my line. But it's this way. I lived most of my life in a little village out in Monroe County and my mother is living out there yet. She never had much in the way of nice things and none of us was ever able to do much for her. But I have been doing pretty well of late and have been sending mother a few things to make her comfortable, and

it just struck me the other day that mother never had a pair of silk stockings in her life, and I thought I would get her a nice pair as a sort of surprize. Now you see just what I want."

Miss Brennan saw, and she laid out her recommendations. "If you want to send something especially nice," she said, "you couldn't do better than a pair of these heavy black silks at \$2.50 or these at \$2. Your mother couldn't fail to like them and they have the very best wearing qualities."

The young man who had come from Monroe County to make his way in the world passed his hands over the stockings musingly: "Mother would probably never wear them," said he. "You know, miss, I can just see what she will do with them. She never had anything but cheap stuff almost all her life, worked awfully hard, and she would think that something like this was too fine to wear. But she will be so pleased to think that I bought her a present like this—that I

want her to have what other fine ladies are wearing nowadays in the big cities, and none of them are entitled to wear better things than mother. Mother will pat these stockings, put them up against her face, I reckon, and then after a while put them back in the box and lay them in the top bureau drawer where she can take them out now and then and look at them. No, mother will never wear them unless she tells them to dress her in them when they dress her for the last time. But you haven't got anything in the store that is too good for her. You can wrap up these best ones, and I'll tell you where to send them. I'm greatly obliged to you, miss."

And Miss Brennan, as she watched his sturdy, manly figure pass down the aisle, turned her face to her stock for a moment. There was a lump in her throat.

Salesmanship is a fine art—as fine as music, painting or writing—when you make it so.

THE VALUE OF VISION

You must have vision if you would weather the world—if you would get anywhere. And you must keep your eye on that vision, just as the children of Israel watched the Cloud by day and the Pillar of Fire by night in journeying to the Promised Land.

“Where there is no vision the people perish”—wrote the old prophet long ago. True then, true now. There is enough, if you look down as you plod, to damn your hopes and cast you footsore and weary by the wayside.

No, you can't reach the goal of your desires looking down or seeing only an arm's length ahead. You can not steer yourself straight by your emotions, any more than the pilot of an ocean liner can steer by the weather. One day all is bright and fair. On the next the sun may hide and the drizzle come down to fill your soul with foreboding—if you let it.

You must go by faith rather than by

feeling. You must let reason rule, and steer by the compass for the Golden Gate of your dreams.

Be informed on parcel post, how packages may be insured, etc. In every town the post-office will give you, free of charge, a compact little pamphlet giving all this and much more valuable information on postal matters.

Shoulder responsibilities. Don't shirk them. Tho they may try your soul, they are your best friends. The gales and blasts and twists are the things that make the mountain oak sturdy. Who would be a willow?

It may be hard to work along for five or six dollars if you believe you are worth more, but don't forget the saying that "He who does no more than he is paid for will never be paid for any more than he does."

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

The Observer was particularly impressed the other day as he watched the patient, careful way in which a railroad conductor explained something to an emigrant woman. She was either stupid or bewildered, possibly both, and she could scarcely make herself understood. The train was about to move. Yet that conductor proved himself to be what every man serving the public should be—a *gentleman*. He reflected credit on himself and on the railroad that employs him. He was a true salesman of that railroad's service.

Come to think of it, the Observer does not believe he ever saw a railroad conductor who wasn't polite and always ready to give you any information in his possession.

Salespeople ought to feel about representing their employers just as railroad conductors feel about representing theirs. Most anybody can be nice to nice people. But to be nice to stupid, odd, or exasper-

ating people—that's the real test of character, the real trial of real salesmanship. Watch yourself the next time you have to meet this test!

* *

It was in the sweater department, and the Observer was there for the purpose of buying sweaters for two little relatives of his living out in the country. During the transaction, the two young saleswomen that were at that counter put their heads together and exchanged some comment that seemed to amuse both. Now the Observer is too old a hand at running around stores and picking up points to take offense at anything of this sort; but how foolish a thing this was! What passed between these two employees may have had nothing whatever to do with the customer's taste in the matter of sweaters or his appearance. The whispering may have been altogether on personal matters. But it was not only rude to the customer but likely

to arouse suspicion that the comment reflected in some way on him. Even if a whispered comment does not seem to be of the amusing sort, the customer is apt to think that it has something to do with defects in the goods or is something else that is being withheld from him. The conversation in the presence of a customer ought to be frank and open. If it is necessary to speak privately to a fellow employee, beg the customer's pardon for the interruption and draw the other employee aside for as brief a time as possible.

* *

Sometimes a bit of slang is very expressive, but it is better to use no slang than to use it to excess. It gives a customer a poor impression of a store when salespeople have their talk filled up with such expressions as "Bet your life," "Sure thing," etc. This kind of talk isn't impressive or entertaining, for thousands of other people use the same expressions. It

is just "sloven talk," and no form of slovenliness ever helps along your selling ability. You know what you think when some one else talks to you very "slangily." Well——!

* *

"Better try it on," said the stickler-for-fine-points salesman when the customer said that the garment would probably fit all right; "then we can be *sure* that it is right before we send it." The garment did fit just as the customer thought, but a customer went out of that store feeling that the place was one in which the management wanted everybody to have as little trouble and worry as possible about goods bought there.

* *

Of course this business of waiting on customers and pleasing them is, with you, just one thing, right along, after another, all day long and all week long; but did it ever strike you how differently the customer looks at it? That trip to the

store or that purchase may have been planned for a long time. Maybe the customer is an overworked woman who had to do a day's work and leave the children in a neighbor's care while she came on her important errand. Maybe she has a "tightwad" husband and must make every twenty-five cents count. She is human—very human. Dissatisfaction over a purchase may mean real unhappiness, days of worry. Her grievance if she is slighted or handled badly otherwise may prejudice her for all time against the store.

Maybe you are the first salesperson of your store who ever served her.

How important, then, that you do everything in your power to make that transaction a satisfying one, to make that shopping day a day of real pleasure. You don't have to preach or nurse or visit the poor to make people happy. Just try to be courteous, painstaking, patient and kind in your daily work.

An employer was calling up a young

man's reference. "Is he an energetic fellow?" was his third question. The answer that the Observer heard was surely an expressive one: "He's a *perfect shark* for work!" In other words, that young man just "eats up" work and is always looking for more. What a fine recommendation! How rare that kind of young man is! How easy he finds it to get head and shoulders above the crowd!



You can be firm while being polite. The other day the Observer heard a saleswoman say to an angry customer: "I am exceedingly sorry, madam, but we could not do that," and there was genuine regret in the tone. Such an answer often proves to be oil upon troubled waters. It is difficult for any one to quarrel with another who is determined to be patient, courteous, and to maintain the dignity of the store. After it is all over, there is immense satisfaction in realizing that you act as a well-bred person should.

THE APPLE MAN



I *wasn't more than five ticks of the watch* after I paused to look at his stock before he was at my side, as courteous as he was enthusiastic about his apples.

I asked the price of a basket of Kings and the price of a basket of Baldwins.

"Let me deliver you a barrel of these," he suggested, naming an attractive price. I demurred. "I'd rather wait," I explained; "I'd try a basket of each and see which I like the better." He told me how fast these good apples were going, and offered to make up a mixed barrel—three baskets of each kind, or four of one and two of another—just as I liked.

Yes, of course, certainly! He sold me the barrel. He deserved to. He made the selling of his apples a fine art.

PASSING THE SUGAR

A hotel is a place where they sell food, lodging and service. It is a business that can be helped about as quickly by good salesmanship methods and hurt about as badly by poor salesmanship as any establishment that could be mentioned. In a dining-room not so very long ago the Observer saw this happen. A waiter wanted a sugar-bowl and he darted over to a table where sat a guest alone and snatched the bowl off from under this guest's nose without so much as a "By your leave." A few days later, the Observer saw another waiter in another hotel hard prest for a bowl of sugar. He, too, went to a table where a single guest had a bowl in front of him. With a bow that would have done credit to a Frenchman, the waiter presented the bowl to this guest and asked him if he would have sugar. Then he, with good grace, was able to take the bowl away.

It was just one more of a thousand instances of what a little difference there

usually is between the right way and the wrong way of doing a thing. What the second waiter did was almost as easy to do as what the first waiter did, but the last man had the consciousness of having done his work as a well-trained hotel salesman should do it, while the first man bungled badly and sadly.

THE ART OF FORGETTING

I remember an occasion when I gave utterance to a narrow-minded, unworthy opinion while talking with a man that I then knew only slightly. The words were hardly out of my mouth before I regretted them. He said nothing—just looked at me. His silence was impenetrable. It disarmed and rebuked me.

For days and weeks I thought about it, and then one day when I had a chance I said to this man that I hoped he would excuse my folly. He declared—bless his heart—that if I had said anything of the sort he had forgotten it. I believed him. When I knew him better I learned that

while he had his full share of patience and temper-trying things, disappointments, and so on, he had the happy faculty of keeping his mind off them—of forgetting them and going on—when it no longer did any good to think about the unpleasant things. He saved the powers of his mind for the things that were worth while, and to-day he is a \$10,000 man!

But you know, and I know, folks very close at home who for years will keep fresh in their memories little differences of opinion, discourtesies, injustices, losses, misfortunes, and so on—people who allow their minds to fill up with these morbid weeds when they need all of their concentrative powers for the things that are at hand and that are to come, rather than for the mistakes ills, and wrongs of the past.

“What do you think?” said a department head of a big concern some time ago as he rushed into the office of a fellow-worker, “So-and-so said to me

just now——” and on he went, relating how a prominent man in the company had just given expression to a rather harsh criticism that had hurt the feelings of Mr. Sensitive Man. And Mr. Sensitive Man wound up his recital with, “What would you do about it?”

“Aw, forget it,” said the other, “Smile at him to-morrow as if he hadn’t said it. You are not going to let a little thing like that ‘ball you all up,’ are you?”

Forget it—that’s it. A sure way to have a hard time in life is to keep thinking about the unpleasant things.

Time is a great healer. We hear much about the blessedness of a good memory; but, valuable as a good memory is, often it is more blest to have a good “forgettery.”

Thoroughness is a habit. If you are not doing thorough work where you are, don’t deceive yourself into thinking that you will do it elsewhere.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

Said a friend of the Observer: "I went into the L—— Store for the first time to-day."

"What did you think of the sales service?" queried the Observer. You see, the Observer believes that the salespeople do more to make a store than the store-building, its location, the windows, the advertising or even the goods themselves. Nathaniel Fowler, Jr., once said to a group of merchants that they could never hope to have a monopoly so far as the goods they carried were concerned. He pointed out that other merchants could buy the same, or very nearly the same goods, but when it came to the *service* of the store, that was something that a merchant could build up without fear that others could offer the same thing. He went on to say that what drew people to a store more than anything else was its "atmosphere," its individuality. Mr. Fowler was exactly right. And the individuality of a store is only the *com-*

bined individuality of the people in it—nothing more. A store is not just a big building full of goods for sale. Far from it. It is a place of “exchange,” where people come with their money to look at the beautiful and useful things of the world and to learn about them, to be served well by salespeople, so that they go away happier because of the way they have exchanged their money for merchandise.

But to go back to the first trip of the Observer's acquaintance to the L——Store. Replying to the question, she said: “I was very favorably impressed with their service. I went in for only a little thing but I got just what I wanted. The saleswoman after learning that I wanted yarn of a certain kind carefully selected three kinds, all of which were close to what I had asked for. She put these before me and seeing that I wanted a moment for inspection, turned away to speak pleasantly to another customer. After a while, she asked if I saw just

what I wanted. There wasn't much to what she did, but it shows that there is a good deal of art in selling even such a little thing as a hank of yarn."

It means a lot for the L— Store to have this customer go away the first time with pleasant impressions of the service. Naturally, the customer has taken the individuality of the competent saleswoman as the individuality of the store.

Really, truly, honestly, now—do most customers take an impression from your individuality that makes them think very favorably of your store?



Do you ever lose your temper!

The head of a shoe section did so the other day—lost in a discussion with a customer, a lady at that, and the result was a most unfortunate scene. The lady had brought back a pair of shoes that had gone to pieces quickly—too quickly, she thought, considering the price. Nobody knows exactly who was right, but

the customer looked like a frank, honest person. Something must have already put the salesman out of sorts, for he disputed the customer's word almost the first thing—told her she ought not to make statements about things she knew little about. Whew! That started something. And the lady, after more than holding her own, threw the shoes down and left the store. The upshot was that the shoes were repaired and returned to her—as would have been done anyhow—but she will probably never go back to that store again for shoes.

It is not salesmanship to get into angry discussions and disputes with customers. Of course, all salesmen have to deal sometimes with unreasonable and even dishonest people, but the good salesman knows that it is his part to be dignified and cool and reasonable.

If at any time anything the store sold has been unsatisfactory, you are genuinely sorry, and you should show that you are. If you haven't authority to make

things satisfactory, take the matter to those who have the authority.

* *

One of the best salesmen that the Observer ever observed was a man who seemed to show goods and talk about them just for the love of it. He seemed deeply interested in every new lot of merchandise that came into his store, and he knew the goods, too—knew all the little fine points of difference. When he wanted to show a customer something he did not announce that, or show the goods with an air of trying to induce the customer to buy. But the interesting part of his work was that when he showed you goods and told you about them in that honest way of his, you often discovered that you really wanted one of those articles.

In other words, this salesman let the customer "sell himself," and the man who understands how to do that has the art of selling down fine.

SHOW THE GOODS



WHEN properly shown, your goods will "talk" as no salesperson can.

There may be reasons why the store wishes to have this or that pushed, but when the customer indicates interest in something else, show it immediately and willingly.

Nothing vexes a customer more quickly than slowness or unwillingness to show something in the case or elsewhere that has attracted the attention.

Do not guess that it won't suit the customer, or that the price is out of reach. The customer is the proper judge of that.

Goods shown quickly, graciously, and intelligently frequently sell themselves.

HOLDING THE NEW CUSTOMER

"Haven't you a small can of this darker green paint?" queried the customer, as the young man behind the counter peered around the rows of paint cans. "I'm afraid, sir, that we haven't a single small can of the dark green in stock," he replied; "couldn't you make use of the larger can?"

The customer shook his head and started away regretfully, for he was already late for the office and didn't want to try another store. Besides, it was his first visit to this store.

"Wait, please." The young man had a sudden idea. "The expressman has just been here, and maybe he brought that special order we sent in the other day. Yes, here it is"—and "whack, whack, whack" went the nail-puller on the box. In a jiffy, both the salesman and the customer were smiling over the exchange of a 25-cent-size can of the dark green paint for a nice, shiny quarter. They were smiling because each, down

in his heart, was saying, "This is salesmanship."

LEARNING THE CUSTOMER'S NEEDS

It was in the toy section, and the customer wanted a doll. "Do you want something for a boy or a girl?" was the first question the bright-eyed salesgirl asked, and it was a corking good question. "And how old is the little girl?" was her next. Learning that the age was two years, she led the way to the case of "unbreakables." Maybe this is the regular way of selling dolls and maybe this particular salesgirl was doing nothing more than they usually do in toy sections, but anyhow the Observer takes occasion to remark that if this is all true the doll stores have most other stores beat a long way in getting directly and agreeably at the customer's needs.

Never mind about the regular way of doing things if you can find a better way.

THE RIGHT WAY AND THE WRONG WAY

"Can you deliver it this afternoon?" asked a customer in a certain store.

"Certainly not," was the blunt reply.

What a difference there would have been had the salesman (?) said: "I am sorry, madam, but it wouldn't be possible for us to do that. If we delivered early Monday, wouldn't that do?"

* *

She saw the customer's name began with H, and what do you suppose she did?

She brought out some of a new lot of initialed towels, showing, of course, those with the letter H on them.

Did the customer buy? Indeed she did. She hadn't said anything about towels, either.

* *

But, alas, in the very same store the following happened: A timid-looking little woman asked for a sample of dress-

goods, and the saleswoman said: "Better buy your dress now. The goods will probably be all gone by the time you get back." This crude and repelling advice would have been all right with a little change: "If you like this piece, madam, I advise you to buy now or very soon, because we are selling these goods very rapidly."

"Yesterday is yesterday, to-day is to-day, and to-morrow will be another day," writes the novelist. What matters it that yesterday was wrong? Don't fret over it. Don't let it drain your energy. Don't let your soul fill up with fears about the future. Just live one day at a time, planning and working to make that day right.

David Graham Phillips said: "I must, myself, promote myself, for in this world all promotion that is solid comes from within."

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

It happened in a sporting-goods shop, but it might have happened in the sporting-goods section of some big store—or in any section of any store, for that matter.

A customer, whose trade was well worth guarding, wanted a canoe. The kind he sought was not in stock and had to be ordered specially. The manufacturer made two grades of boats in the size that the customer wanted, an "A1" grade and a "No. 2" grade. The principal difference seemed to be that in the "No. 2" grade the planking where it showed inside the boat was likely to have a few knots, dark places, and other slight imperfections, and the gunwales were of plain spruce; whereas in the better boat, the gunwales were of mahogany and in one piece. After consideration, the customer decided that the "A1" boat was well worth the eight dollars difference in price. He was buying the boat largely for appearance and wanted everything

about it to look as trim as possible. But, alas! something occurred that happens too often. The salesman trusted to memory, and when he made out the order blank he specified the "No. 2" grade of boat. After a three weeks' wait the customer was notified to call—his boat had arrived.

He came around as full of enthusiasm as a fourteen-year-old boy. Most people, after all, are only grown-up children. Imagine his feelings when he saw a canoe with a cheap-looking white gunwale made in two sections! Up to that time the salesman had not seemed to be aware that he had blundered; but he was not long in finding it out, for the customer gave expression to his disappointment in no uncertain manner. He had waited three weeks for a special boat, and the result was the very thing he had tried to guard against—cheap appearance—and all through carelessness in taking an order.

In what a position the store was placed!

There were three things to do: First, order a new boat, according to the customer's wishes; but this would take three weeks more and the second wait would increase the customer's wrath. Second, refund the amount paid in advance and call off the sale; but such action would leave the customer unmollified. Third, let the customer take the boat he didn't like but this would result only in aggrieving him further.

There was, however, one thing that might have eased up the situation. Had the salesman acknowledged his mistake and seemed genuinely sorry, the customer, tho exasperated, probably would have overlooked the error. But Mr. Salesman wasn't quite big enough to acknowledge his mistake and try to square himself. He admitted reluctantly that he, himself, had advised paying the extra eight dollars and ordering the "A1" canoe; but at the same time he endeavored to argue the customer into thinking that the canoe on hand was really all right, after all. The

customer was in no humor to be convinced. Finally, he walked out of the store apparently undecided. Afterward he telephoned that while he would take the canoe, he did not care much now whether he bought a boat at all.

The result of the transaction is a customer who is nursing a grievance and who is likely not only to turn his trade elsewhere but to give the store a bad name among his close acquaintances.

When customers are disappointed, the salesman should at least be able to feel that nothing that he could have done to insure satisfaction has been left undone.

Criticism may hurt, but you will show your good sense by always receiving it properly. It will do you good sometimes to say, "That was stupid (or careless) of me, and I will guard against such work in the future." Remember that those who do the criticizing have no agreeable job; but they are expected to do their duty.

ABOVE THE CROWD



TO be a little more courteous than is necessary—

To pay a little stricter attention than most people do and consequently be a little more accurate than they are—

To be a little better informed than “the average”—

To work a little harder and a little more willingly than “the bunch”—

To be neat, modest, and yet confident and aggressive—

To keep the mind on clean, useful thoughts—

To spend a little less than is earned—

To be happy and yet never self-satisfied—

Summed up, it all means being the rare person who not only gives most but gets most out of the “job” and out of life.

For such people the latch-string of opportunity hangs out at many doors.

CAN YOU USE SUGGESTION?

You don't have to study psychology in order to understand that thing that we call suggestion, which is such a powerful aid in selling goods.

Suggestion is the saying or doing of things that will start other people's minds moving in the direction that you want them to move. It means helping people to think things out for themselves. Most people, you know, rather resent being driven to a decision. You must lead, rather than drive.

Remember the story of the bootblacks. One shouted "Shoes Shined Here." The other called out "Get Your Sunday Shine." The second fellow did considerably more business, because he started men to thinking about their Sunday needs.

When you say to a customer, "Where shall we send this?" you turn her thoughts toward sending and rarely will she volunteer to take the package along.

If you say, "Will you take this with

you?" you turn her thoughts toward taking, altho you leave her free to direct that the package be sent 'if she prefers that. But experience shows that this little difference in phraseology saves a great deal of time and labor during busy seasons.

"These colors are very becoming to people of fair complexions." In saying this, you do not say that the thing is just what the customer before you needs. That would be presumptuous, as a rule. But there is in this comment a suggestion to the effect that the customer is of fair complexion and that if the goods are becoming to other people of fair complexions, they will be becoming to her.

"These sell so fast that we can hardly keep them in stock." When you say it, you may be thinking that right here is the point where the customer will do well to stop looking and to buy, but you can't come right out with that. The more suggestive remark will cause the customer to think the thing out.

People like to feel that they came to their own conclusions. Every clever salesperson knows this and uses suggestion to start and lead thoughts.

Never forget it—write it fresh on the tablet of your mind every morning—that courtesy is one of the keys to success, and that every one who wants the gift of courtesy can have it by just reaching out for it and holding on to it.

You will never have room in your mind for big thoughts if you allow the space there to be filled with rubbish.

A New England store has just passed a rule as to “onion breath” and strong perfumery. Can you blame the bosses?

A customer in the store is worth two on the street. Make thoughtful suggestions to him or to her and watch your sales-total grow.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

Says an acquaintance of the Observer: "I certainly was pleased by something that happened in the Martinique Hotel, New York, on my recent trip there. I haven't stopt at the Martinique often, and the last time I was there before this trip was about three months ago. But no sooner had I stepped up to the room clerk than he asked, 'Mr. Brown, would you like to have Room 633 again?' I'll be blest if that fellow wasn't on to his job well enough not only to keep tab on my name but on the room I had before. I take off my hat to his fine work."

Such work is fine work, and it is just as important in the store as in a hotel. Remembering the names of people and remembering the kind of things they are interested in is a tremendous aid to your salesmanship. And it is just a matter of habit. Surely if the negro hat-man in a hotel can remember the owners of fifty hats without any checks to help him, you can remember many of the people who

buy goods in your section. At any rate, if you can't remember a customer's name, don't say, as so many salespeople do, "Do you see what you want, mister?" or "Do you see what you want, ma'am?" "Sir" and "madam" are the proper terms to use if you can not recall the name.

The hotels, by the way, afford some very live lessons to retail stores. It would be a fine thing if every reader of this book could have three tracts printed by Mr. Statler, of the Statler Hotel, Buffalo, for the benefit of his employes. Here is a sample of Mr. Statler's common-sense talk: "There is one privilege that no Statler employee has and that is the privilege of arguing with a guest. You must not say that the meat is well done when the guest says that it is rare, or that the ice-water was carried up when the guest asserts that it was not. There is just one thing that a hotel has for sale and that thing is *service*. The guest pays for service. He pays your salary and mine. It is possible for a doorman to so swing

the door as to make the guest feel that this is his hotel; and it is possible, too, for him to so sling the door as to make the guest think that he will find a rusty pen stuck in a potato when he gets to the desk."

It is a great thought, Mr. Statler—this idea of having everybody serve the visitor so well that he will think of our place of business as his hotel or his store. It is something in which everybody from the doorman and the errand boy up to the heads of the business have to help in order to get perfect team work.

* *

This happened to Mrs. Observer. She was very anxious to have something about the house fixt up, and the firm that promised to attend to the matter finally said over the telephone that the job was such a little thing they did not believe they would be able to attend to it.

Little thing! If this firm only knew it, the big successes of life are made up of

the little things done well. By the way that a store does the little things the public judges how it will likely do the bigger things. It is worth a great deal to a store to have its bundles tied a little better than the ordinary, to have its deliveries a little more prompt, to have a little more accuracy in charges and in addressing than is the rule, to have people in the store that are a little more pleasant and a little better informed about their merchandise than "ordinary salespeople."

* *

It wasn't his fault that the order had been delayed. In fact, he didn't have anything to do with it, but when the customer made the wire hot with his opinion of a house that couldn't give any better service, he didn't blurt back angrily that he wasn't to blame and that the customer should get the other fellow on the wire. No, he was too good a salesman for that, and some of these days the Observer thinks he'll be found owning a business.

He let the customer have his say, and then so patiently and with a voice full of genuine regret he assured the customer of the firm's desire to have everything right—said the matter would be attended to immediately, and so on. He soothed the irate complainer; he saved the store a customer. Sometimes this is hard to do, but it is salesmanship.

* *

"But that is a \$6 hat," said the salesman.

"I can pay \$6 if I like the hat," replied the customer smilingly, and then the salesman felt exceedingly cheap. It was just a slip of speech, no doubt. What the salesman probably meant to say was, "Certainly you may look at that. It is one of our \$6 hats and well worth the money."

It is never good salesmanship to hint, by word or tone, that the article that has caught the customer's eye is too expensive for him or her to purchase. Show

the goods, drop information about price casually and tactfully, and let the customer decide as to whether the price is within reach.

LET THE CUSTOMER TALK SOME

In an office the other day a big salesman was trying to sell something to a prospect whom he had cornered. He—the salesman—was making that outrageous, inexcusable mistake of monopolizing the conversation. He started in as if he had been wound up, and so engrossed was he in his own performance that he evidently didn't see what others saw—that the man he was talking to was bored. Now and then the prospect, jumping at an apparent lull in the stream of words, would start to say something, but the salesman merely raised his voice a little so as to drown the other man's remarks and went on.

It was getting laughable when the prospect's face suddenly got an angry red after one more ineffectual effort to get

into the conversation. "Wait, wait," said he, and he doubled up his fist and shook it in the salesman's face, until Mr. Windbag slowed up. "I never could, in all my life, talk while anybody else was talking and maybe you can't either. I'll make a bargain with you. You can talk a minute, and then you are to shut up like a clam and I'll take a minute. How will that suit you?"

No, the salesman didn't sell anything. He couldn't have sold that prospect a thousand-dollar lot for five hundred dollars. This was an extreme case, but a great many salespeople are guilty of the rudeness of breaking in on the conversation of other people, of not waiting until the proper time to get into the discussion.

Don't pronounce "again" as if the last syllable were "gain." Pronounce the word as if it were spelled "a-gen," putting the accent on the final syllable.

THE REWARD OF SERVICE

*"I gladly wait for Miss B——. She
is so helpful and obliging."*



A CUSTOMER said just that of a certain saleswoman—a woman who long ago saw that salesmanship is a fine art and who takes pride in being an artist at her work.

There are a few like this saleswoman, but not enough. The stores of the country need hundreds—are crying out for them.

Such salespeople make better business, better wages, better living.

Help the store and help yourself by making a fine art of your work. It pays—in money and other ways.

SHOW THE BETTER GOODS

Most shoppers have a little margin beyond the price that they may name as what they have thought of paying. So don't be afraid to show the better class of goods. After all, it is a compliment to the shopper for you to suggest, even by showing the better article, that he or she is able to pay the higher price. Generally speaking, the adage that "the recollection of quality remains long after the price is forgotten" is sound. There are stores who encourage salespeople to put forth the higher-priced goods and who find that people accustomed to buying cheaper grades are very often much pleased when they have had an opportunity to try better goods. For that matter, statistics show that people are buying better things. Rural customers are buying cloaks, dresses, stockings, etc., at double the prices they were willing to pay a decade ago.

The great thing is to think right.

APPEALING TO THE HEART

Don't forget how far love or sentiment moves people to buy goods. Such a remark as "Have you a small boy? He would be tickled to have one of these," or "This rug would delight your wife," are likely to strike home and induce purchases that otherwise would not be thought of.

It is a real salesman's business to study people and to make such suggestions. Storepeople who merely sell what customers come in and insist on buying are just order-takers.

CONCENTRATION

A Chinese girl studying at one of the American colleges has the ability to concentrate down so tensely that when she must stop studying a certain subject at nine o'clock, we will say, in order to keep some other engagement, she finds it necessary to set an alarm clock on her desk arranged to signal at nine. She has trained herself, as is the Chinese custom,

to give herself entirely to the subject under consideration. Possibly the Chinese go to extremes in this matter, but they are more fortunate at any rate than those unfortunate folks who have allowed themselves to develop such a habit of giving "scattered attention" that they can never settle down effectively on anything. Good work requires thorough attention. You can't do justice to one undertaking with your mind on another.

Genius, said Helvetius, a French philosopher, is only concentration. Take a lesson from the Chinese. When you are giving attention to any work, give *real* attention; put all your mind on it.

DON'T SAY

Don't say "A certain party was here." "Person," "customer," "caller," and a dozen other words are in better taste than "party," and "certain" isn't needed.

Don't say, "They learned it to him." Say "They taught it to him," or "He learned it from them."

Don't say, "Can I show you one?"
Say, "May I show you one?"

Don't say, "You was." Say, "You were."

Don't say, "If I was able." Say "If I were able."

Don't say, "We would of." Say "We would have."

Careful, sympathetic, undivided attention to what the customer says is the highest form of courtesy. It commands the customer's confidence. It gives you pointers on what goods to show. It develops thoroughness.

Just suppose that two-thirds of your idle moments were devoted to learning all about your stock. You'd be a wonder!

Know your goods thoroughly, study people constantly; be earnest, honest, and courteous—there isn't much else to this thing we call salesmanship.

THAT OTHER JOB



YOU dream and dream of the interest and energy you would show if you were just in a different position.

That is human nature, all right; but do not deceive yourself. Every job has hard and disagreeable features. You simply can not see them, looking on from the outside.

If you do not force yourself to do thorough work where you are you will never develop the ability to do thorough work anywhere. A salesman, like water, rises to his true level.

The real "other job" for you is probably not with some other firm, but a bigger responsibility with your present firm. Get it by filling the present office to the point of overflowing.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

The business of studying people is one of the most interesting subjects in the world. Here is a customer—a sensitive, shrinking little woman—who is immediately embarrassed or annoyed if you watch her closely. If you are a judicious salesman, you will not hover over her, but will put her at ease. The next customer who comes along may be of the opposite type, somebody who really likes to have another person help her make up her mind; there, if you are a good salesman, you will, without appearing to do so, lead this customer along to a decision. You can't deal with all people alike, but you can always be alert to see the way to deal best with the customer before you.

* *

It's wonderful what interesting things you can discover in ordinary materials when you study them closely. The Observer was impressed with this the other day in watching a saw salesman demon-

strate. This sawman knew more about saws than any man you ever saw—could talk with the carpenters and cabinet-makers about all their pet problems. And he sold saws! The Observer came near buying one, altho he had saws aplenty.

A friend tells the Observer that American-grown raw cotton can be graded by an expert into thirty-three grades, when perhaps we ordinary folks could not grade it into more than three grades—poor, medium and good. The cotton expert knows cotton; that explains it. He can tell you why the long-fiber cotton is superior, and all such things. He makes a seemingly dry subject interesting.

* *

It is always so much more satisfactory to buy an umbrella, a trunk, or a rug from salespeople who know umbrellas, trunks and rugs thoroughly, who can tell you why certain things are made as they are made, and why the higher-priced article is better.

Do you look for books, magazines, and advertising matter that make you better informed on the goods you sell? Do you get all you can from buyers, heads of stock, manufacturers, and manufacturers' salesmen? Let's suppose you are selling gloves. Suppose you knew every important thing about glove-leathers and dyes, fashions, buttons, etc. Wouldn't you sell a great many more gloves? Wouldn't your work be easier and more satisfactory all around? To be sure, and it is just as sure that you would get what you were entitled to in the way of increased compensation.

* *

A woman, quite old and feeble, wandered into a big bank, looking around rather helplessly. In an instant, an assistant cashier whose desk is near the door for just such work, was at her side, inquiring with marked courtesy what he could do for her. She wanted information on some trivial matter; wasn't look-

ing for a place to bank money. But she got as good attention as if she had called to open an account. A few weeks later a young man came in and opened an account with a first deposit of one thousand dollars, and volunteered the information that he came into that bank because of the courteous attention his mother—the old lady—had received.

* *

He is in the Section where the Victrolas are sold, and he has about the most accommodating disposition the Observer has run across in a number of years. Nothing is too much trouble to show you. With patience and good humor he helps you to find things that you can hum but can't quite call by name. And he doesn't seem to be disappointed or vexed if you don't buy. When he hasn't just the record you want, he tells you when it will be in and lets you know that it won't be any trouble to hold one out for you if you will tell him when you can come in

again. The Observer wonders whether this accommodating salesman was born with all his good qualities or whether he cultivated them to some extent.

* *

“His worst enemy was himself.” What a great sermon is tied up in those five words. How often it is true that a young man or a young woman has a good chance, has friends to help along, but through dowdy indifference—laziness, obstinacy, a loose tongue, neglect to think, or some other equally objectionable trait—never rises above mediocre work and mediocre pay.

Don't be like the man who buried his talent. Keep a grip on yourself. Make the most of your opportunities.

* *

The trolley, after a hard climb, stopt at a little hut labeled “Sand House,” took on a fresh supply of sand, and then with

well-sanded wheels pushed around the hard up-curve considerably easier.

What a great thing it would be, thought the Observer, if all of us would just take on a little more sand when we strike the hard places, and then go on with fresh grip. You can do it. You have more grit in reserve than you have ever called out. Use your "sand house." Next time you strike the hard curve, don't groan or moan, don't back: sand the wheels and turn on the current.

ARE YOU BUILDING?

Don't you believe in character development?

It is just as true as the sun in the heavens that if you set your mind on the better qualities you would like to possess you will day by day draw nearer to your ideal. That is the law of nature in the physical world and it holds just as true in the mental. When you exercise your arm faithfully the muscle builds itself up. Strive to be patient, cheerful, alert,

thorough; and tho you may not be able to see great improvement from day to day or week to week, the upbuilding is going on. Thousands upon thousands have proved it to be so. You can! Do a little self-analyzing. Put down on a piece of paper what you want to cultivate; make up your mind that you will possess those qualities; and you *will*.

IN LOVE WITH HIS JOB

Five words that stand for five thousand—"In love with his job."

His job isn't mere work, but joy and satisfaction.

Hours are nothing. Sunday is welcomed as a day of rest, but there are times when he impatiently waits for Monday to come that he may get down early and get at things.

Advancement? It never worries him. It comes so quickly and automatically that sometimes he wonders if it was only a year ago that he got an increase.

Others with apparently the same ability and education do not seem to have the power of this lover of his job. He radiates enthusiasm. Customers feel it and fall before it.

No danger of his mind getting full of morbid thoughts and other rank stuff.

He has found his work; found glowing physical and mental health with it.

Happy man!

BE PLEASANT BUT NOT "THICK"

Don't talk too much or "get thick" with people around you.

The pleasant "Good morning" and the little acts of consideration—these are not only good things from a general point of view but are really good business.

But chaffing, horse-play, and much talking, particularly with those responsible to you, encourage a familiarity that breeds disrespect and indifference to work.

Affected superiority is an abomination, but a certain amount of dignity and re-

serve is essential to good work and capable leadership.

Be democratic, but keep your place.

Don't gossip about the executives of the store or your immediate superiors. Usually the tales that are mouthed around by those who haven't anything better to occupy their minds are untrue. You are better off to decline to listen to such gossip or to repeat it.

To give half-hearted attention is a mark of ill-breeding. To give whole-hearted attention puts you among the well-bred, on-to-their-jobs people.

A salesman is known by the customers he keeps.

Courtesy attracts courtesy. And even when it doesn't, a genuinely courteous manner will make the rebuffs of others less disturbing.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

The Observer doesn't like the suggestion of the word "bait," but it seems to him that selling is something like fishing. A good fisherman, you know, carries bait of different kinds. The bait that will pull in a string of beauties of one kind of fish will be sniffed at by another kind.

The Observer was hunting up some collars the other day. It was easy enough for the salesperson, without any staring, to see that the customer before him wore a rather conservative style of collar. But, having eyes, he saw not. He fetched out an extreme style—the wrong bait—with the observation that it was the "latest thing." And then the Observer took keen delight in remarking that the fact that the style was the very latest was the best possible reason why he *wouldn't* want it.

Take a quick review of the customer and start your sale with what that tells you. Be instantly ready to change tactics as soon as the customer gives better leads.

The Observer went on to another store where a clothing man was as earnest and careful in selling a suit as if the customer had been his own brother. He wasn't effusive; didn't weary you with his chatter; he didn't say a thing that you would suspect was insincere—anything that seemed to be in the interests of the house rather than of the customer. He didn't even follow that rule of salesmanship that you sometimes hear—"Always agree with the customer." When he could not honestly agree with the customer he pleasantly disagreed and gave his reasons. He knew fabrics, he knew styles, and he studied his customers so as to know in a general way what they wanted without any waste of time. The result was that he sold two suits when the Observer had come in for only one.

* *

A uniformed salesperson was observed deliberately spitting on the floor of a drug-store. This, in an establishment

where many goods of the sanitary kind are sold—goods designed to prevent disease, and yet the salesperson openly and flagrantly did something that is prohibited even in the common street-cars. How can we hope to impress people with the value of our goods and service if we ourselves do not practise good manners and good taste?

* *

If you ever have the chance, take a meal or have an interview with a well-bred person of a French or Spanish-speaking country. Perhaps we Americans can justly claim to have more modern ideas in many things, but some of the people of the old country can give us great lessons in the fine art of courtesy. The Observer recently had a delightful hour with a gentleman who had spent many years of his life in France and Buenos Aires. He had that delicate, gracious manner that defies description, but yet makes the men and women who possess it spread sunshine

and satisfaction wherever they go. Courtesy is an old subject, but it is well worth thinking about every week of your life. Come, now, are you just as agreeable, as careful of the little points of courtesy, as eager to be always well bred as you should be? Think how much your personality would be improved by more regard for the fine polish that makes the real gentleman and the real gentlewoman.

* *

An acquaintance of the Observer has recently spent several months studying a large sales organization in the effort to find why some people succeed, while others, with apparently no more in their favor, so far as education and temperament go, do only mediocre work or fail. This student of human nature discovered several important things, but most important of all he found that every successful salesman had a powerful motive, a purpose, a mainspring, that spurred him on toward success. In some cases

the motive was the love of power. In other cases it was the love of money. Sometimes it was found that the successful man was spurred on to unusual effort by the fact that he had a wife or a family that he loved to provide with the comforts and luxuries of life, and now and then the successful fellow was some one who was hoping after a while to have a wife to provide comforts and luxuries for!

But the great lesson is that you can't get very far without a purpose, without a mainspring, any more than an engine can run without steam in the boiler.

So get a motive.

Fall in love, if you like, with a sensible girl who will tell you that you have got to hustle if you want her as a life-partner.

If you don't want love as a mainspring, try pride or ambition. Resolve to make something of yourself, to be head and shoulders above the crowd.

The Observer has several times in his

life seen envy and humiliation turn into a very live mainspring. Somebody else got promoted, and the young man or young woman who had been drifting along, taking things as they came, got stung into activity.

Motive is the thing. Get it!

THE HARD-TO-HANDLE CUSTOMER

The reasonable customer who comes into the store with a definite want in mind presents no problem. Anybody can serve such a person acceptably.

The people that try your ability are the unreasonable kind, the queer ones, the customers with grievances; and there's a lot of such folks in the world. While the store and its employees are not expected to stand for everything in the world, the right and proper way to treat every guest who enters the doors is to give dignified, courteous consideration to the very limit.

We are all familiar with the customer who comes in with a complaint that she has nursed overnight, and who perhaps

thinks that she has been served very badly indeed. Maybe she was; maybe she wasn't. We must give her the benefit of the doubt and listen to her story sympathetically. Old hands at the selling business know that it is best to let such a person tell the full story. That often acts as a sort of safety-valve. Then you can get at the merit of the case and do whatever can be done to adjust the matter or at least to show the customer that the store regrets that the transaction was not satisfactory.

Try not to get excited. Don't raise your voice because the customer raises hers. Tho the customer may be slightly or wholly in the wrong, you are representing the store, and it is your business to play the part of a skilful, well-bred, well-controlled salesperson.

CLOSING A SALE

As has already been said, if skilful work has been done in securing favorable attention, developing interest and

building up belief in the merchandise and the store, the final step of the sale—getting action from the customer and closing the transaction—should be a simple matter. Indeed, if a salesman has trouble regularly in closing his sales, it is more than likely that his work in building up interest and belief is faulty.

However, sales frequently “hang fire” even when the preliminary work has been carefully done. This is a stage of the sale that requires much tact. The salesman is, of course, desirous of adding to his total, but if he attempts too plainly to force a decision, the store may lose the sale. The customer’s immediate satisfaction and permanent good-will must never be overlooked.

Some people find it difficult to choose, and really welcome a little gentle push toward a decision. Sometimes a simple question such as, “You like the hammered silver better than the others, don’t you?” is enough to settle the doubt and to fix the choice. Often a suggestion such as

this is effective: "You can take this home and if you are not entirely satisfied, it may be brought back and exchanged at your convenience."

"If you decide to take this one, we can easily make the changes by Saturday so that you can have the suit for Sunday," is the way a clothing-store salesman clinches a number of sales.

"Shall I have this one wrapt for you?" is another example of closing suggestion. "We are selling a great many of these and have no complaints whatever," is still another. There are scores that can be used effectively if used judiciously.

Some customers resist any effort on the part of salespeople to help them decide. Such people may prefer to have a few minutes for final inspection, undisturbed by the presence or the suggestions of the salesman. Study your customer and act accordingly, but remember that it is your business to make as many sales as can be made well.

PERSONAL CAPITAL



HE hasn't the reputation of being stingy. In fact, he has the reputation of taking care of his family as well as most men do, but he said to me the other day that he was thinking of spending about a year in preparing himself for a new line of work that would be more congenial and profitable, and he added, with a little pardonable pride, "I have laid by enough money so that I can afford to go a year without making a cent."

Think what an advantage that young man has! He can afford to take advantage of opportunities that would be denied to nine out of ten young men because of the fact that they are living well up to the month's wages.

This young man has given us a fine example in this day of high cost of living.

Do you think he missed much when he eliminated the extravagances and cheap amusements that most young men indulge in?

"BULGE OVER"



"THE best way to get a better situation," says the New York Times, "is to fill your present job so full that you bulge over."

These twenty words say about all that need be said about better jobs—and better salaries.

The world has plenty of people who rattle around loosely and noisily in their jobs, but not half enough of the earnest, dependable "bulge-over" brand.

If present employers don't see the bulge, others will. So don't worry about that.

Just be SURE that you are REALLY BULGING.

TALKS BY THE OBSERVER

"Can't do it—not delivering out there to-day"—and plunk went the telephone as he slammed it back on the hook. His voice was raspy and impatient, too, as if he were thinking to himself: "Why do these confounded people keep bothering us on a busy day like this just before a holiday."

The customer felt like saying, "Well, you needn't be such a grouch about it." But the telephone shut off too quickly; so she just thought it.

Naturally, there are times when unusual requests for delivery can not be granted, but never forget that, even when you can not say "yes," there is opportunity to cultivate good-will for the store. Pertness and unnecessary abruptness are poor business-getters.

"I am very sorry, Mrs. Jones," said a grocer on such an occasion, "but delivery to-morrow morning is the very best I can do on that. Would that be all right?" His tone showed genuine regret, and, tho

"to-morrow morning" would not do, he left with the customer an impression of sincere, never-failing desire to serve—which is the sort of impression every salesman should leave.

"Will you excuse me just a moment," said a bright-faced, clear-toned little saleswoman to the customer, and when she returned, she added, "I am sorry I had to leave you, but it was unavoidable."

It was just a little thing to do, but it made a strong impression on the customer and on the Observer. It is always rude to leave a customer unceremoniously. This kind of courtesy is unfortunately rare, but it turns selling into something more than a cold-blooded exchange of merchandise for money. Furthermore, it will bring that young woman increased satisfaction in her work as well as increased salary.

* *

The Observer was trying to get a ready-made coat, but he was having a

hard time to find a perfect fit. The only coat that he liked was too full in the front.

"Let's send for our head tailor," suggested the salesman, "and see what he says about it."

The Observer thought to himself, "Here's where something is going to be 'put over on me!' The tailor will look at the coat and tell me impressively that it can be made perfect."

But it did not happen that way.

"There isn't a thing we can do to that coat," said the tailor. "The goods are in the front and we can't put them in the back. Besides, he has to have a coat that is big in the back. You can't fit him in that model, Sam. Why not try a model D?"

The salesman had done so already, and finally he admitted regretfully that he had not a coat in the place of the desired material that would give the Observer a correct fit.

Some people would call that poor sales-

manship, but it was not. The Observer thought the salesman ought to know that his sincerity was appreciated, so he said:

"You may not realize it, but you did the best bit of selling work to-day that you have done in a long time, even if I am not carrying away one of your coats. This is my first visit to your store. Maybe you and your tailor could have 'put something over on me'—sold me a coat that was a poor fit—but I never would have put my foot in your store again. I am here in this city frequently, and I know now that I can come in for an overcoat or anything else I want and be treated squarely."

The man or woman who learns to sell well, week in and week out, will never have to hunt long for employment.

An opportunity is created when a customer enters the door. Make the most of it.

STICK!



I*F the applicant for a position can say truthfully, "I was with my last employers five years," he scores a strong point in his favor. It means that he has stability—which is often just as important as ability.*

We all have our grievances; we have to deal with eccentric bosses maybe, and conditions are not by any means what we should like them to be. But a man is not much of a man if he can not endure and overcome the hard things that fall to his lot in nearly every position.

What of a new position? It may not be any better, and it may be a great deal worse.

You know your present employer's hobbies, and you can get along with him; the other hard things of the position no longer terrorize you.

You may be jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire if you make a change solely on account of a few difficult or disagreeable conditions.

Of course, changes are sometimes necessary, but in most cases if the employee would simply grit his teeth and hold on, bending his mind and energies to seeing what could be accomplished in the work he is doing, instead of thinking what he could do in some other job, he would in the end be better off.

DREAMS AND DREAMERS

Let them call you a dreamer, if they will, but keep sacred in your heart the vision of the broader, nobler, more useful, more happy person you would like to be.

Out of such dream-stuff comes slowly but surely the bigger self.

Every great improvement, every forward step, was once some one's idea—some one's dream.

A LESSON FROM THE WAR

There is a good lesson in the press dispatches about the exploits of the German cruiser *Emden*.

"Wireless messages were flying around her" says the Associated Press, "but she didn't talk—couldn't afford to. *She worked.*"

Talking is a fine art in its place but most people over-practise it. We are always talking, talking, talking about what we are going to do. Doing, not talking, is what counts.

Says Nathaniel Fowler, Jr.: "A good salesman either talks much and well *or less and very well!*"

DON'T SAY—

Don't say, "There isn't no use." Say, "There isn't any use," or "There is no use." Watch for these double negatives; they form a large percentage of our slips of speech.

Don't say, "more handsomer." Say, "more handsome" or just "handsome."

Don't say, "This will wear good." Say, "wear well."

Don't say, "your man," in referring to a customer's husband. Call a husband a husband. Likewise, it is in better taste to refer to a man's wife as his wife, or as "Mrs. Blank," rather than as "the Mrs.," or "the missus."

A CASE OF WAIT

"Are you waited on?" asked Gertrude, coming forward to the customer after she had been telling Margaret exactly what she said to George the evening before.

"No," said the mean customer, who felt indignant over having to wait minutes while a private conversation was being completed, "I am just waiting to be waited on."

S-E-R-V-I-C-E

Just seven letters in it, but it is one of the biggest words in the English language.

For service in its full sense means service to the customer, service to the store, and service to yourself.

You accomplish the three things at once when you constantly study your work and strive to do it in the best possible way.

A PROGRESSIVE CREED

I will not allow worry, or idle or vicious thoughts to poison my mind and stunt my creative powers. I will keep clear of such mental weeds by storing my mind with better thoughts.

I recognize that genius is only con-

centration; therefore, I will concentrate on whatever I do.

When I have to make a decision, I will open my mind freely to all the facts. When these have been reviewed and my conclusion reached, I will close my mind to further consideration of the question unless new facts are brought to light. For doubt and indecision are more harmful than occasional mistakes.

I will accept the inevitable with good grace and not waste any precious energy in bitter reflection.

I will maintain my sense of proportion—endeavor to give all things their true weight, no more, no less.

I will be as clean and careful in my speech as in my dress, for I realize that slovenliness in either is a great bar to appreciation and advancement.

I will strive to be unselfish in my thinking, my reading, my listening, my talking—to be more broadly informed and thereby able to discuss with real interest the things that appeal to others.

I know that I have the God-given power to rule myself, to improve my character. Therefore I intend, by the exercise of my WILL, to draw nearer, day by day, week by week, month by month, to the ideal of the high-minded, gracious, efficient, useful, and happy person that I keep always in my mind.

Think how much extra business the store could get if everybody on the payroll would boost at every opportunity.

The store can not have any better reputation than that which its salespeople give it.

The recollection of a good salesman remains long after the purchase is forgotten.

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